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Yours truly

J. S. Sewell

JOSEPH S. SEWELL.

A QUAKER MEMOIR.

COMPILED BY

EDITH SEWELL.

LONDON :

HEADLEY BROTHERS,

14, BISHOPSGATE STREET WITHOUT, E.C.

1902.



Wm. T. Tully
J. P. Smith

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PREFACE.

IN sending out this little book of loving memories my niece and I feel how difficult it is to do justice to J. S. Sewell's character ; and the difficulty has been increased by the absence of letters and papers, and also by the fact that very few of his contemporaries are left, or are able to supply material about his early life. If we except the time of his residence in Madagascar, his was an uneventful life as regards his position in a public capacity. In his own family there was much of trial, from illness and suffering, which was always borne in calm, unquestioning submission to the will of God, and it is this trait in his character to which the writer has sought to draw attention. May it be a word in season to some of us who are at times weary and disheartened by the evil and sorrow around ; encouraging us to do the little we can do, and to wait patiently for God to work in His own best time.

H. M. GRACE.

JOSEPH S. SEWELL.





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Art. Paper Co.

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ready to believe, a shutting oneself off from all human interests, but was something which hallowed all business and social life, all family and national duties. Then also, he found a friend who recognised and loved the real, striving, earnest heart beneath the dogmatism and self-consciousness. By his engagement to Mary Ann Ellis he was drawn out of his own particular interests to a brighter and less self-centred life.

The third influence was one which we trust may never be wanting in the Society of Friends. The constant interest of the older members of the Meeting in the young men attending it, was only duly valued in the after years of his life. But it was the social ministry of such Friends as Robert and Rachel Jowett, and Benjamin Seebohm, which contributed greatly to the making of the useful and unselfish, wise and loving man.

When about nineteen years old, J. S. Sewell was troubled by doubts as to the correctness of Friends' views on several subjects. His aunt, Sarah Stickney, had, in 1837, married William Ellis, the well-known missionary, and it was probably his influence which unsettled J. S. Sewell. Sarah Stickney was already known as a writer on various subjects, and was greatly admired by her nephews and nieces. The close contact with missionary labour, the realistic pictures of the steadfastness under persecution of the native Christians, which Mr. Ellis portrayed, roused an unquenchable and lasting enthusiasm for missionary work on the part of Joseph Sewell. William Ellis appears to have been particularly drawn to his wife's

nephew, who on his part used to consult him on many religious subjects.

To an enthusiastic and ardent young man, Friends of that period appeared to be lacking in vitality, to be living on a past reputation rather than fitting themselves for usefulness in the present. Joseph Sewell was evangelical in his views, fearful that the Society had got into a groove of self-complacency, and so was somewhat inclined to believe that all religious efforts outside its borders must be good. So convinced was he that water baptism was essential to a Christian confession that he decided to leave the Friends; also he thought there might be more opening for missionary service if he was unfettered by Quaker trammels. At this time, when the door was closed to missionary work in Madagascar, he had some thought of working among the Jews in Syria.

He wrote lengthy, argumentative letters to his father concerning Baptism, quoting many texts which he thought bore on the subject. Abraham Sewell respected his son's convictions, and of all his children Joseph was the one most assured of a definite date of conversion, and, at that time, most reliant on his own judgment and opinion; but his father seriously remonstrated with him when he suggested resigning his membership in the Society, advising the delay of six months, besides entering very fully into the theological aspect of the subject. Robert Jowett also tried to help him, and his unfailing kindness, his efforts to understand Joseph Sewell's point of view and to give him wise counsel, though apparently fruitless

at the time, were, in later years, often referred to by J. S. Sewell, the memory making him in his turn more patient and sympathetic with the younger generation. The two following letters are of interest showing how he was led finally to abandon his position in favour of external ceremonies :

First Month 21st, 1840.

" MY DEAR FATHER,

" I am afraid thou wilt think I am long in writing to thee, but several motives have induced me to delay. I think I told thee that I had showed my manuscript on Water Baptism to Robert Jowett, and that we had a little conversation on the subject, which had, however, failed to convince me of the incorrectness of my views. Last month I came to the conclusion that if nothing prevented I would be baptised early next month, for I thought it was my duty to delay no longer. I do not, however, like to do it, nor did I think it right to do so without having first mentioned my intention to Robert Jowett and having some more conversation with him on the subject. As an opportunity for doing so never occurred, I thought it would be best to write a note to him expressing my intention and making a few remarks on the conversation we had previously held. This I did, and handed him the letter last First-day week. As soon as he read it he wished to talk to me, and last Sixth-day, being Monthly Meeting, I dined at his house. After dinner we had an interesting chat together for an hour and a half. He certainly did not convince me that my opinions

were incorrect, but he concluded by asking me if I had any objection to talk with Benjamin Seebohm on the subject, to which I at once replied in the negative. He then added that he had spoken to B.S. that morning about me, and on being asked if he would have any objection to speak to me on the subject he said, 'of course not,' or words to that effect. R. J. then advised me to send him my manuscript and ask him to fix a time when I should go to his house. I am glad R. J. did speak to B. Seebohm, and that consequently I shall have the opportunity of having an interview. It is, I confess, rather a formidable prospect, but I think I can so plainly trace the finger of Providence in all that has yet transpired respecting it that I feel assured He will guide me aright. My prayer is that while God would not suffer one of such superior abilities and spiritual discernment to overturn opinions of mine which are really in accordance with the mind of Christ, He also would not permit pride or prejudice or any other feeling to preside in my heart as to make me unwilling to submit to the truth, however opposed it might be to my preconceived opinions ; in a word, that God would make my way very plain before me and would make me willing to be or do anything which He pleased."

First Month 29th, 1840.

"MY DEAR FATHER,

"I was afraid lest my last letter to thee should have made thee rather anxious on my account, so I can see no reason why I should not just

•

write a note to relieve thee of that anxiety. I went to Benjamin Seeböhm's to dinner last Seventh-day, and spent the afternoon and evening until half-past ten o'clock, with the exception of meals, almost entirely alone with him. I don't know when I have been so interested as I was in his company. One circumstance he told me led me to pay more attention to the advice he gave me than I perhaps should otherwise have done. It was this : that previous to the present state of the Society, and before any of its members had openly called in question the correctness of its views, he had many doubts as to their correctness himself, especially on the subjects of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and had been led into pretty much the same train of thought on these matters as I have been, and once or twice, he said, he was almost on the point of leaving the Society. But he thought it best to wait patiently before he took such a step, and having left off textual examination of the Scriptures on these points, he was led, from the whole scope of scripture doctrine, to see the correctness of Friends' views regarding them ; and succeeding years have only strengthened his opinions. We had a great deal of conversation together on a great variety of religious topics, and, as I said before, I was intensely interested, and when I had about left off speaking he addressed me in such a way as though he had known all that had been passing in my mind, so as to quite surprise me. The immediate effect of his conversation was to induce me to wait for still further demonstrations of God's will before I took any important step, and my

intention is to leave off thinking on these subjects as much as may be for about a year to come, at least to leave off studying on them. I have not time to say much more, so with dear love to all, I remain,

“Thy ever affectionate son,

“JOSEPH S. SEWELL.”

During the following year he became engaged to Mary Ann Ellis, daughter of James and Mary Ellis, of Bradford, and later of Letterfrack. The same year Samuel Priestman gave up his business and went to live at Hildenly, near Malton. Joseph Sewell stayed on at the mill until Christmas, and then, early in 1841, went as a teacher to Ackworth. He seldom refers in his letters to Baptism, but was apparently growing more and more settled in his Quakerism. Nearly two years later, in a letter to a cousin (11th mo., 1842) he says, “How well I can remember the conflict that passed in my own mind when, just before I had intended to be baptised, I was brought in a striking way to see that I was only walking in my own wisdom, and whilst pretending to be acting in obedience to the Divine will, I was in fact walking after my own will. Oh, if I may give thee any counsel, it will be to lie low at thy Saviour’s feet, till He altogether make darkness light before thee, and crooked places straight.”

The outcome of this first interview with B. Seebohm was the foundation of a deep and lasting reverence for him on the part of J. S. Sewell. In one letter he says, “I look up to him as a member of the Episcopal Church would to a priest.” It was an instance of genuine hero-

worship, which lasted right on until they were separated by death. During the next few years, whenever he was visiting James and Mary Ellis at Bradford, Joseph Sewell generally spent part of his time at B. Seeböhm's house. Soon after he began his life at Ackworth, during a time of depression, when all his future prospects seemed very uncertain, he visited Benjamin Seeböhm, who on parting said that one particular message seemed to have been given him for J. S. Sewell, that he should lay to heart and lean upon the words, "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord." And it is just because the natural man was not inclined to patiently wait, was despondent and restless, that the appropriateness of these words as addressed to him strikes us. Those of us who knew him in the later years of his life, when his beautiful, calm, joyful trust in the love and power of God seemed a rebuke to our restless lack of faith, our impatience of His dealings, saw the literal fulfilment of this promise. Difficulties and sorrows only deepened his quiet hope, and it was because he lived a "surrendered" life, put himself in God's hands, that he attained that good peace which radiated from him in his latter years. This brief memoir would be far from truthful if it depicted Joseph Sewell as a saint from his childhood. Rather, to be true, to have, in fact, any sufficient reason for being written at all, it is the record of a faulty soul made beautiful by the indwelling of Christ.

II.

ACKWORTH AND RAWDON.

AFTER Samuel Priestman left Kirkstall, Joseph Sewell was somewhat undecided as to his future. His apprenticeship was over, and he had doubts as to the possibility of continuing where he was. He felt that the business he was engaged in was one in which it was increasingly difficult to make a living. He had neither sufficient capital nor ability to push it, as seemed essential to success. Doubtless the wish to be able to make a home within a reasonable period roused him to consider his position, but even more strong was the thought that as a teacher he might be preparing for the mission field, and have more time for study. In a letter to his father, dated 11th mo. 17th, 1840, after enumerating various things that had turned his desires in the direction of teaching, he says :—

“Moreover, this is a sphere in which I should be more likely to be generally useful, inasmuch as at present there is a great want of teachers in the Society. These considerations, I think, independently of any other, appear to me sufficient almost to decide the question, but there is also another reason which with me is certainly not a slight one, that is the bearing which each occupation has upon my future missionary prospects. Whilst that of business presents scarcely

any leisure to pursue studies of any description, that of a teacher affords great facilities for it, and, humanly speaking, would enable me to prepare myself much better for that important station. What has made me hesitate so long over it is the dread I have of being an unsettled, changeable individual, and of doing anything rashly and with an impatient spirit. . . . I am sure I shall never regret the time I have spent here. I have learnt what I, in all probability, never should have done elsewhere, and I am very sensible that so far I have been in my right place. Nor do I think the time I have spent in business will injure me as a teacher, but on the contrary, benefit."

He heard that Robert Doeg, one of the teachers at Ackworth, was expecting to leave the school at the end of the following January, and suggested to Thos. Pumphrey, the Superintendent at that time, that he should take his place on trial for six months, not to receive any salary during that period. Interviews with the School Committee resulted in his being accepted. There was just a shade of doubt as to whether his religious views were quite orthodox, which was not to be wondered at, considering the opinions many Friends knew he had only lately held. His father's friend, Samuel Tuke, was appointed to very closely interrogate him, and his verdict being satisfactory he was considered to be a safe guide to the children. His bias was certainly anti-traditional. He found it hard to understand his younger brother Edward's deep love for, and interested study of, old Friends' books, thought it decidedly a waste of time; in more than

one letter he refers to the majority of the Friends' writings as useless, if not actually hurtful.

To a cousin who was feeling an awakening of religious and theological questions which she had striven to satisfy by the perusal of Barclay's *Apology*, he writes at this time :—"I was much amused by thy allusion to Barclay. It is not the book I would have recommended, but I have never read it"! And even in reply to her question as to why he condemns Friends' books, he says, "The literature of the early Friends was merely temporary ; great harm has been done by later generations taking it for their guide rather than the Bible. But, after all, perhaps I should not judge, as I have read nothing of the period, except a recent American edition of *George Fox*, which I like"! We know that he did not retain these crude opinions for many years, though he never became a student of Quaker literature. And surely there is good excuse for one who saw clearly how the refusal of many Friends to admit modern religious works or criticisms was cramping and narrowing their outlook.

After a month spent very happily at Thornton and Malton, he began his new duties with a determination to be painstaking and faithful in all particulars. The habit of early rising had been instilled into him at Kirkstall, where he was often up by four o'clock to work the mill. So at Ackworth he generally devoted an hour, or sometimes two, to the study of Hebrew and Greek before school duties commenced. His good resolutions were sorely tested during the first months. Reading his accounts of his struggles with

his scholars, one hardly knows whether the ludicrous or the pathetic predominates. He had forgotten, when talking of teaching, that to impart instruction is one thing, to interest a number of restless boys another. The gift of teaching was not naturally his, and for a time he laboured under great discouragement. A love and deep admiration for Thomas Pumphrey soon grew in his heart, as well as for Thomas Brown, the senior master, but he had, naturally, little love for boys taken collectively. Years afterwards he wrote from Madagascar to his daughter Lucy, who had just begun to teach two or three: "Little boys are always, at least very often, very interesting beings for a short time, but I never yet met with one who was an angel for a whole week together or anything approaching to an angel; so make up thy mind that they will be troublesome even if it were angels that were taking care of them."

But he was not satisfied with himself, and strove hard to be the friend as well as the schoolmaster. His earnestness and his real humility could not help leading him right, and we find that as time passed on what was at first a dreary duty became a most absorbing interest. Once his sympathies were aroused he got on much more happily and won the affection of many of his pupils. Two months after his arrival at Ackworth he writes:—"I still find the boys rather difficult to manage, though I think I have more confidence than I had, and feel more satisfied with them. But, oh, I find that it requires no slight wisdom to manage a lot of children, and especially to teach them

religious truth. The reason why I shall not be able to write much next week is because I shall be 'on duty,' that is, I take charge of the boys out of school as well as in school, and so have all the time employed from six in the morning till 8.30 at night."

There is among the few papers left by Joseph Sewell a diary of the year 1841. It is rather, we might say, a daily note-book, in which he records his desires for the boys, his repeated failures to arouse them to an interest in religious matters and in their studies, his deep contrition when he has to record his own lack of zeal and sympathy, prayers for wisdom and humility, as well as special references to individual boys who have troubled or cheered him. It is too personal an out-pouring to the Master he was striving to follow for us to quote, but it has made those into whose hands it has come feel how deeply concerned he was for the spiritual welfare of Ackworth, how he longed for a great awakening to the joys of Christian service among the children, and how constant and persistent he was in his efforts to help them. Four or five boys are particularly referred to as those who have helped him specially by their behaviour and desires to be upright and Christlike. Though now most have gone to their eternal rest, all grew to be men whom the Society of Friends could ill have spared, filling useful places as citizens, conspicuous for single-hearted devotion to Christ; yet when one sees the joy and happiness they gave to their often-discouraged but loving teacher one cannot but think that not the least part of their service for Christ was when at school they helped him by the unconscious influence of a loyal boyhood.

Some time during his second year at Ackworth, Joseph Sewell started a scripture class out of school hours, inviting ten or a dozen boys to the first one. The note-book he used for some of these lessons is still in the possession of one of these first ten members of the class. It was lent, and then finally given to him by Joseph Sewell when he left school in 1843. One is struck by the immense amount of preparation and care involved in these scripture lessons. They were thoroughly enjoyed by the boys, being full of practical and interesting thought.

Another old Ackworth scholar, Charles Linney, who knew him more intimately later in connection with the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, says :—

“ My earliest recollection of Joseph Sewell was when, as one of the masters at Ackworth, he resided in a little tree-clad house at the foot of the Great Garden, overlooking the canal. But far more vivid in memory is the picture of him on one particular occasion about the year 1851 or 1852. He was then the teacher of one of the senior classes, and I, as a young school-boy, was in the junior class in the same room, taught by Samuel Clemes, whose son was a colleague of J. S. Sewell's in Madagascar. It was morning school, and we had just assembled and were sitting in silence for a few minutes before commencing work, when J. S. Sewell rose at his desk and offered an earnest prayer for us all. It was in those days a most unusual thing,—in fact, I never remember another instance in my time. But the earnest spirit has remained with me for nearly half a century. A few years later

his bold and outspoken utterances upon the same subject of prayer made his younger fellow-members look upon him as a man of enlightened views, and gave him a strong hold upon the minds of many who fifty years ago were striving with hearty prayerfulness to lift the Society of Friends from formalism and quietism."

In November, 1843, Joseph Sewell married Mary Ann Ellis, and left the School household. But they were both in a very true sense a part of the School Family over which Thomas Pumphrey presided with much wisdom and sympathy. Their hearty desire was to "go in and out before the children in holy consistency," and to have their little home a place where any of the staff or children might come for rest and encouragement. Besides J. S. Sewell's brother William, and his cousin, Mary Stickney, there were many among the teachers whose friendship was very dear to both. The death, in 1846, of William Sewell created a terrible blank. It was hard for J. S. Sewell not to have his brother's advice and cheery brightness to rely on any longer.

It was in the latter part of the same year that J. and M. A. Sewell, with their little daughter Lucy, removed to London for the greater part of a year so that Joseph Sewell might attend the London University. Both apparently thoroughly appreciated the change, with the wider outlook and intercourse with fresh people as well as the greater facilities for obtaining books, though M. A. Sewell records how delightful it was to get home again and find the warm welcome awaiting them.

After eight years at Ackworth, Joseph Sewell became Superintendent of the Friends' School at Rawdon, where another eight years were spent. They undertook the post with the desire to help the School, to be really Father and Mother to the children, and it is very touching to see how completely they gave themselves up to the work. That it was not in vain has been testified to by many old scholars. One says: "I was a wild boy when I went there, but J. S. Sewell's untiring efforts to make us love the best things made me desire Christ and try to follow Him. We all loved M. A. Sewell. She would come to see us settled in bed and talk to one or another." She herself used to be somewhat fearful lest she might spoil the girls for their after life. Many came from homes where demonstrations of affection were rare; many looked forward to filling subordinate positions in strangers' households when they left. She did not want them to think they ought always to be treated as lovingly, but yet could not forbear from putting all the brightness she could in their path. She would say: "Remember, *I* kiss you, for you are my own children, while you are here, but you must not expect it from others when you leave."

In a letter to R. Thursfield, her most intimate friend, M. A. Sewell writes a week or two after her arrival, describing the pressure of work at Rawdon. Apparently staff and servants were almost entirely fresh to their duties; also she had more than a dozen guests staying each a night or two. Of her first General Meeting she says: "It seems as if it will be like a city given up to sack for that one day!"

The years at Rawdon were to try Joseph Sewell deeply. His wife's health had never been robust ; gradually she grew less and less able to take her share of work. With an indomitable spirit and energy she returned after each attack of prostration to her work and far overtaxed her strength. She had an almost super-conscientiousness which made her dread any unfulfilled duty. Her own increasing family claimed a great deal of attention ; there were one or two outbreaks of serious epidemics in the school ; and beyond all this she seemed to feel that if any extra work of hers could save expense to the Committee she must not spare herself. Also, besides anxiety on her own account, the health of their only boy was a constant care. It was to Joseph Sewell a period of gradual renunciation of many cherished hopes, but with each fresh sorrow came fresh grace to meet it. Teachers and servants became very warmly attached to J. and M. A. Sewell ; the thoughtful consideration with which they were treated called forth the best in all. After the first vacation M. A. Sewell writes :—

“ We have a very full school, thirty-five boys and twenty-six girls. It does not add much to the work, and having all the servants return in good spirits and inclined to do their utmost is an unspeakable help. They washed the blankets and quilts,—quite 150 at least,—very cheerfully themselves. J. has put up trellis all the length of the front which looks exceedingly pretty, and the garden looks very gay. Altogether the place would be nearly to thy mind, dear R., and how I should enjoy having thee ! ”

A more serious breakdown than usual resulted in M. A. Sewell going to Malton for a complete rest, leaving her family under the care of Anna Pumphrey (Greer), who more than once under similar circumstances had come to her help. While she was away an epidemic of mild typhoid broke out in the school. She describes the anxieties of this time in a letter to R. Thursfield :—

“My hands are almost too cold to write, but I have been wishing to tell thee how much we have been passing through since I received thy kind welcome note at Scarborough. I gained strength so slowly at Malton that it was decided dear Bessie and I should have lodgings at Scarborough for a while. My accounts from home were such that my yearning desire to be helping them was only stayed by the knowledge that I should be a care rather than a help to dearest J. if I went in my then state. Nearly thirty children were more or less affected by the attack of low fever. The Cottage was full, upstairs and down, and nurseries for the convalescents had to be prepared in the house. I gained strength fast,—longed, if I might only be the stones instead of the Aaron and Hur, to be supporting my husband's hands at home. I missed my daily letter the day before I left, and on reaching Leeds was awestruck by Joseph's appearance. He looked run down, mind and body, and on inquiring I found that dear Willy had been lying unconscious for two days, in what I think the doctor considers a touch of inflammation of the brain. How I kept up till I got home I cannot now know,—as the day the

strength is,—but on getting in, the joyous welcome of my servants quite overpowered me and for a while I gave way. Then the doctor came and said Joseph must be kept in bed. The pressure nerved me for a time. Not having a bed in which my children could be put, they three and their nurse were sent off to our kind refuge at Bradford, and after taking the direction of things myself again and arranging for a nurse for Willy for night and dear Anna to be with him by day, I took my own place by my darling husband. He had borne up for weeks, doing for everybody, as H. Ord says, the work of two or three people, till Willy was taken ill, when he nursed him in addition, hardly taking any rest; and when the thing he most dreaded, the telling me at Leeds was accomplished, he seemed completely to sink. . . . Till he was better and dear Willy had recognised me I had scarcely a sense of weakness, but then it returned overpoweringly. The waves were held back in tenderest love that they did not overwhelm me; and now we are very different, J. nicely, Willy much as usual, the dear little girls back, the school going on much as usual except for absentees, the teachers and servants recovered, my own health returning, and in a degree, the power of walking."

M. A. Sewell's loving care, in spite of her increasing weakness, for the school children is shown in a letter written in 1857 to her husband's step-mother, Hannah Sewell. [Abraham Sewell had married, in 1841, the widow of Henry Brady. This was a union which brought much happiness to all her husband's family.]

In this letter she speaks of an awakening among the girls, which she felt to be in great measure an outcome of her husband's fervent prayers:—

“At first I felt afraid to take any notice of it, and did not, only I felt the deepened responsibility as I cannot tell thee, and as if I were not ready for the work that was before me. Some days I felt as if I could do little but pray all day, such an overwhelming sense of ignorance and insufficiency as words cannot describe, and when they came to me with the tears running down their cheeks to beg I would speak to them, what could I do, dear mother, but gather them round me at His footstool Who alone could teach them and me. . . . Oh, dear mother, that we may be enabled to break the bread they are crying for and that nothing in our walk or ways may be a hindrance to them!”

The death, the previous summer, of a little daughter, two months old, had been the first break in the family, and when, at the close of 1857, their only son, Willy, was suddenly taken from them, it seemed for a time as if M. A. Sewell would be unable to rally. They had already contemplated leaving Rawdon; probably his wife's state of health was the strongest reason with Joseph Sewell, who felt she ought not to have the burden of so large a family resting upon her. Also, both were aware that to some members of the school committee the broadness of the views held by J. S. Sewell was not acceptable. He had discarded the straight coat, still at that time the orthodox costume of Friends, and had many friends among members

of other denominations. M. A. Sewell writes :—
“ The subject has come before some of our Friends in connection with the feeling of our unquakerliness ” ; and though they delayed their resignation at the urgent representations of the majority of the school committee they felt that a change was inevitable.

Before they had left, M. A. Sewell's health grew so much worse that she was obliged to spend the winter of 1859-60 in lodgings in Scarborough. She returned to Rawdon in the spring, but caught a chill from which she was unable to recover. She was so far well that she was moved to the house of their kind friend, E. Blakey, at Bradford, in order to be spared the turmoil of the breaking-up for the school vacation and of their own removal, for Joseph Sewell resigned the post of Superintendent at the close of the Spring term. At Bradford she grew rapidly worse, and passed away within a fortnight of her removal. Her husband was wonderfully upheld and carried safely through this time of trial for which many things had been gradually preparing him, but it was very hard to have the pain of parting increased by the fact of having no home of his own. In a letter to his brother Edward, after describing a visit to Bradford and giving the doctor's opinion, he says :—

“ However, there is One who has said, ‘ Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me.’ I do desire to rely implicitly on His word ; indeed I feel there is nothing else on which I can rely ; and whilst I have very little hope indeed in what anything else can do for my dearest

one, I have not lost hope that prayer may yet be heard on her behalf. I do desire to be completely submissive; but it is our privilege in *everything* by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, to make known our requests. If it were only myself that was concerned I feel it would be more easy to bear, but when I think of my darling children left motherless,—but I must not go on thus."

After his wife's death Joseph Sewell moved with his four daughters to Scarborough for a short period, the eldest, Lucy, leaving school to be his house-keeper and sister-mother to the others, the youngest of whom was barely four years old.

At Scarborough he filled a very useful place in the Meeting. "He was exactly what the Meeting needed," one Friend records. The late Margaret Rowntree, an intimate friend of his daughter Lucy, writing of this time, says:—

"There were a company of us, girls who had just left school, and he was so good to us. We were perhaps more hungry than we knew for earnest religious teaching. I do not think his preaching was generally austere; it was thoughtful and of the kind that woke us up. One or two of us can remember definite longings to be "real Christians" in a way we had hardly known before he influenced our lives. Though he must have had times of great depression, and was feeling the first loneliness of his life without his wife, he seldom was anything but cheerful with us. He seemed to think his daughters must not be saddened by his grief. I never saw anything like the unity

between him and Lucy ; they shared their droll speeches and laughter as people share meals."

It was in 1860 that he was recorded a Minister by the Society of Friends. The first time he had spoken in Meeting was in 1841, at Pickering. From that time his ministry was frequent. He considered that it was his discarding of the Friend's coat which delayed the recognition of his gift by his Meeting. On the day of his first utterance we find the following note in his diary :—

"May I ever be actuated [when speaking in a Meeting for Worship] by the simple motive of love to God, and ever favoured with a clear sense of His guidance. Enable me to lie low at Thy feet, and keep me in those points on which I am so easily led astray,—the love of praise and the esteem of men. Grant that I may be like clay in the hands of the Potter."

For a few months he endeavoured to establish a school at Pickering, but found there was no opening for such an enterprise and gladly accepted the offer of a post in Sharples, Tuke, and Co.'s Bank at Hitchin, to which place he removed in 1862. Hitchin became his home until he went to Madagascar, and there he left his daughters under the care of Lucy Neild while he was absent. His usefulness in the Meeting and Adult School was considerable. One member of his class, an old soldier, told a later teacher how he had been unable to write when first he attended, and how J. S. Sewell would hold his hand and go over the letters with him until he could write alone, and with the same loving pains

taught him to read. A former member of the Meeting, who was a child at the time, says :—

“ We were never afraid of J. S. Sewell. He was so full of fun and always ready to play with us. I remember we used often to walk with him to Meeting, and would beg him to “ speak to the children to-day.” We liked his sermons, for if not entirely for us, there were bits we felt specially for the younger ones, and formerly we had not been used to special addresses.”

The love and sympathy for children had grown more and more, and was a distinguishing trait of J. S. Sewell’s character. Even in his old age he used to rejoice in a good apple crop in his garden to send to little grand-nephews, and when past three-score years and ten he might be found “ playing horses ” and romping with small folk.

Hitchin was not destined to remain his home. The time of waiting and training was at last over. The very losses he had sustained liberated him for that missionary service to which he had so long felt himself appointed, and, in 1864, without any seeking or planning on his part, the opening came. He possessed the waiting heart ready to hear the call.

“ That is the heart for watchman true,
Waiting to see what God will do.

* * *

Forced from his shadowy Paradise,
His thoughts to Heaven the steadier rise ;
There seek his answer when the world reproves ;
Contented in his darkling round,
If only he be faithful found,
When from the East th’ eternal morning moves.”

III.

MADAGASCAR. PART I.

JOSEPH S. SEWELL entered on his missionary labours with the firm conviction that all his previous life had been a training for this end. He waited his Master's time but always held himself in readiness. He says : " My own interest in Madagascar dates from the Spring of 1838, when my dear mother, a few months before her death, sent me a short account of the martyrdom of Rasalama, the first who was called to suffer death in that island, on account of her allegiance to Christ. Shortly after this, Rafaravay and five other fugitives from persecution found their way to England, and the appearance of these at a missionary meeting I attended in Leeds affected me much."

At that time J. S. Sewell thought there was no opportunity for foreign missionary work in the Society of Friends, but was not prepared to leave it on that account. Ever since the rise of the Society, even before the Quakers were an organised body, they had recognised the world as the mission-field for the servants of Christ. No country was so remote, no heathen people so degraded but that individual Friends had visited them to tell of the love of Christ and to appeal to the inward witness in every human heart.

The Society as a whole had, as time passed on, shared in this work by maintaining those who were abroad, but no provision was made for any settled residence in a heathen country. The history of J. S. Sewell's departure for Madagascar is the history of the commencement of organised missionary work by Friends.

For twenty-five years he had found that his share in the service of Christ lay mainly in the education of the children placed under his charge at Ackworth and Rawdon. This, indeed, proved an excellent preparation for the work in which he was afterwards engaged.

In 1864, after he had been two years at Hitchin, he received a letter from his uncle William Ellis, who was then in Madagascar, which opened up the whole subject more directly. William Ellis had for many years known of J. S. Sewell's desires and had frequently corresponded with him. Now he wrote telling of the death of Mr. Stagg, of the L.M.S., who had been in charge of the Normal School in Antananarivo, pressing him earnestly to do what he could to induce Friends to take some share (beyond pecuniary help, which had already been given by several Friends) in the educational work in the Island.

This led J. S. Sewell to seriously consider whether it was not his duty to offer to fill the vacant post ; but the care of his motherless children, and also a sense of being of some use to Hitchin Meeting, restrained him from any public expression of his feelings, though he says : " I had a secret feeling that God had long been preparing me for His work there . . . and was, amid the tossing to and fro of these thoughts, much

comforted by the assurance that 'he that believeth shall not make haste.' "

The writing of a few short letters to *The Friend* on the subject, pointing out that there seemed an opening for the service of Friends along educational lines, which need not interfere with either their principles or practice, was all he ventured to do. He was convinced he would not have to go alone and waited to see if there was any response to his letters before mentioning the conflict in his own mind.

He was not sure that Friends would liberate him for such service without binding him to a stricter observance of the Society's distinctive religious tenets than he thought desirable; he wanted liberty to judge on such matters when he should see how it might affect his usefulness to the native church. He also was uncertain whether the London Missionary Society would endorse the Rev. W. Ellis's invitation and encourage him to enter their field of labour whilst holding Friends' views. He waited until the return of Mr. Ellis for more information on this point.

In the spring of 1865, his dearly loved youngest child, Katie, was taken from his care to her Heavenly Home. It was an exceedingly heavy blow, for she had a winsomeness about her which must have been similar to the sunny, lovable temperament of the little granddaughter who was, thirty years later, to become the child-martyr of Madagascar; but J. S. Sewell could not help seeing that the great claim his family had on him was lessened. The elder daughters could enter into and comprehend his work.

In the following autumn Mr. Ellis returned, and to J. S. Sewell's great astonishment, threw cold water on his plans. He retracted much of what he had written, saying that he feared the introduction of another religious body would prove unsettling to the minds of the native Christians, and that other denominations might, if the Society of Friends went, follow their example and cause great confusion by their conflicting opinions, nor could he at all encourage Friends to partake in the educational work. Though this change of tone was quite unexpected, it made J. S. Sewell put aside for some months all idea of going to Madagascar, until another letter arrived from Mr. Ellis, saying that the L.M.S. had been unable to find a successor to Mr. Stagg, regretting that he had discouraged J.S.S. and suggesting that he should open intercourse with the L.M.S. Committee. Within a few days of the receipt of this letter, came one from an American Friend, Louis Street, in which he said he believed it to be his duty to devote himself to the service of Christ in Madagascar, and having read J. S. Sewell's letters in *The Friend*, had written to him on the subject, trusting he would bring the matter before English Friends. Very gladly did J. S. Sewell welcome the thought of companions (for Sarah Street wished to accompany her husband), and gratefully and humbly did he acknowledge the guiding hand of God.

Only a short time before this, a "Provisional Committee" had been formed, when Rachel Metcalfe was preparing to engage in missionary work in the Zenanas of India. This Committee, composed of those deeply

interested in foreign missionary work, hoped that a Friends' Missionary Society would be formed ; meanwhile they were prepared to help any Friends offering themselves for service. It is very characteristic of J. S. Sewell that he brought Louis Street's letter before their notice without mentioning his own "concern." He says : "I was very certain that it would not do to mix our concerns, and L. Street, by his public announcement to me, had the right of priority." Doubtless he knew that were he to state his desires, English Friends would naturally lean towards an Englishman and one they knew something about ; and if they were not prepared to assist all three L. Street might be refused.

As it was, the Provisional Committee invited Louis Street and his wife over to interview them, holding out the expectation that if this had a satisfactory result they would contribute to their maintenance.

This being settled, J. S. Sewell found no further hindrance to making public his own call for service. After the manner of Friends he first "laid his concern" before his own Monthly Meeting* ; by this Meeting he was encouraged to proceed to the Quarterly Meeting,† which in its turn recommended him to the Standing Committee of the whole Society of Friends. A portion of the Minute granted him from this Meeting is as follows :—"Believing that his gracious Master has called him to, and prepared him for, this very important service, we liberate him for it, after a very

* The local Meeting for Church Discipline.

† The aggregate of Monthly Meetings in a county or district, meeting four times a year.

cordial expression of unity and sympathy therein. . . . We commend him to the grace of God for the work before him, and we crave that he may be strengthened both to preach Christ crucified faithfully, and also to walk amongst those with whom his lot may be cast, in simplicity, godly sincerity, and consistency with our Christian principles, and that the blessing of God may rest upon him and his labours."

The following letter is of interest, even though we view with some amusement the great excitement which seemed occasioned by one going to a heathen land. Does not the fact of the emotion evinced testify that Friends had somewhat shut their eyes to the claims of other countries? Now, we may thankfully say that it is not viewed as a more strange thing for one to feel a call to dwell in Christ's service abroad, than for one to give himself to that service daily and hourly at home.

*" 19th of 11th mo., '66.**

" Since my last to thee we have been spending three days at Hitchin. We went partly to attend the Monthly Meeting, and partly on other business. It was an interesting time and very solemn season. Dear Joseph Sewell laid before Friends his concern of long standing, and raised in his breast by circumstances connected with his childhood. . . . He spread his heart's burden before the Lord, and it seemed given him to believe that the time would come when service should be appointed him in Madagascar, but

* Letter to R. Thursfield from Hannah S. Allen; kindly lent by John T. Thursfield.

not to go alone. This seemed so entirely clear that his mind settled more trustingly for the time as well as the special work to be shown him. . . . Since the announcement of Louis Street's similar concern, Joseph S. has increasingly felt that his time was nearing, and now fully come, when he ought to lay his burden before Friends.

"A solemn silence followed. The meeting was almost entirely unprepared for such an announcement, and tears flowed freely from many eyes, as much emotion being shown on the brethren's side as on ours. A. R. first bowed the knee in short but feeling prayer for right guidance on so important a subject; and one by one, on the men's side principally, sympathy was unreservedly expressed, and unity with their beloved brother, so far as to believe it the calling of the Heavenly Master. To most of his near relations the prospect was entirely new and almost overwhelming. The women Friends took but little part in expression at the time, but were loud in their lamentations afterwards. How I did wish for thee amongst us, dear R. !

"Calmly, but not unmoved, our dear brother stood, whilst tears were flowing from many eyes near him. His heart seemed fixed, trusting in the Lord, and surely that Lord will be with him. 'Just as he was such a blessing to us here!' one Friend remarked to me, 'Why, he is as much needed here as in Madagascar!' Our aged father was ninety-three years old on that day. He is quite of the old Quaker school and thinks there is much over-excitement among our Society now, adding, 'especially near London.' What he

knows of this I know not, but I told him many of us had to feel amidst abounding weakness how little we had ever personally done for our Lord.

"Thy much-attached Friend,

"H. S. ALLEN."

J. S. Sewell found in the very fact of the cordial encouragement that he and L. Street received, a ground for fear that the Friends, who by providing the necessary funds were partaking in the work, hardly realised the freedom under which they wished to proceed. Long consideration of the subject had convinced him that he dare not be bound by any promise to abstain from uniting with natives or other missionaries in the observance of the Lord's Supper, if his so standing apart were to be a stumbling-block to the native church. Also, as church membership in Madagascar was signified by water baptism, he would not protest, even where he might have the oversight of a church, only refraining from himself baptising. That some Friends would feel this attitude a denial of the distinctive tenets of the Society was evident. The absolute confidence placed in him made him uneasy. No questions were asked as to the details of the lines along which he and L. Street contemplated working.

At one of the final committees of arrangement, after their berths were taken, in fact, little more than a week before the ship they expected going in sailed, an opportunity occurred for more open statement of their position.

So grieved were many members of the committee that they asked to be relieved from their task, and some who had guaranteed money for two or three years felt they must withdraw their promised support. Such being the case, the committee of the Yearly Meeting laid down the concern; they felt that the support of these missionaries could no longer be considered a matter for the Society of Friends as a whole, but recommended them to apply to the independent organisation of the Provisional Committee, having a full assurance that they would find their path clear and plain.

This proved to be so. The Provisional Committee took all responsibilities and placed no restrictions upon their actions. J. S. Sewell records that the change of authority was an intense relief to him, he being "very thankful we were not unduly fettered, and also that we were not going to sail under any false colours."

Of this time he writes :—"We were, of course, closely interrogated, but we could not withdraw from our position. I told the meeting that I could not go out simply as a representative of the Society of Friends; I owned a higher Master and must follow Him. I felt very strongly that it was not a matter of present interest only, but that if our going out should, as I hoped it would, be the prelude to much work by our Society in foreign countries, it was important that from the commencement those going out should have large liberty to follow such a course as an enlightened apprehension of surrounding and frequently varying

circumstances might dictate, unfettered by the ordinary customs of the Society in England."

It is very interesting to find, in this connection, that J. S. Sewell, instead of drawing nearer to outward forms or ceremonies, found reason to think that even the most universal of the ordinances were hindrances to the growth of the native church. The natural superstition of the Malagasy made them attach undue weight to the outward, rather than to the spiritual baptism and communion of Christ. In a letter to his daughter Lucy, written about six months after his arrival at Antananarivo, he says :—" Tell Mrs. L. I have become more and more of a Friend."

Yet, whilst holding his own opinion on these particular matters, he did not judge other missionaries who had never been trained in the Friends' views. In a journal, written for private circulation, he speaks very strongly, bitterly even, and with shame, of the ignorance of many Friends at home regarding the wise and patient work of the London Mission, and what they were daily doing to lead the Malagasy to Christ.

How fully and cordially he himself was received by the L.M.S. may be judged from the two following extracts. The first is from an appreciation kindly contributed by the Rev. W. E. Cousins, to whom J. S. Sewell constantly refers as most helpful and kind in all his intercourse with him :—

" The relation which existed between Mr. Sewell and the members of the London Mission were always of the most friendly and cordial character. He came

among us as our senior in years, and we soon recognised in him one of rich and mature Christian experience, and full of the spirit of his Master. We had so often been reminded by our own Foreign Secretary at that time [Dr. Tidman] that we were 'a body of very young men,' that the presence of a man of years and experience among us gave a feeling of steadiness and confidence, and many a time during these critical years we derived much help from his experience and counsels. In our large Congregational Union Meeting, for instance, started soon after his arrival, as well as in many of our meetings and conferences of various kinds, his carefully considered opinion always carried with it much weight. In the shape that many of our organisations have ultimately taken, the influence of the orderly methods of Friends, as represented by Mr. Sewell and those who have followed him, has been quite a perceptible factor."

And a member of the L.M.S. writes to *The Friend*, September, 1868, as follows :—*

"All the schools are looking up since the arrival of our Quaker friends ; I believe there is a considerable increase in numbers, and the attendance is regular. This is very pleasing, as schools were a long time the weak place in the Mission, the energies of the missionaries being overtaxed with other labours, so that the spare time they gave to the schools was not sufficient to advance the pupils as they could wish, and their efforts were limited ; hence the advent of our

* From a pamphlet by H. E. Clark, "J. S. Sewell and his work in Madagascar," printed for private circulation.

new and valued friends was welcomed with delight. I believe they will do a great work among the juvenile population here."

Surely, by no means the least important part of J. S. Sewell's service was the manifestation of unity and brotherly love between the representatives of the two Christian Societies, an object lesson which we have reason to believe was not lost on the Malagasy.

In 1887, writing to a member of the F.F.M.A. in China, who had asked for details of church policy and of procedure in Madagascar, Joseph Sewell explained very fully his own and probably the Friends' views of the position of a member of their Society in the foreign mission field.

He says that when he and Louis Street arrived in 1867 it was just at the close of the twenty-five years of persecution. There was already firmly established a native church, a devoted band of L.M.S. missionaries working among them, while an ecclesiastical polity had been fairly established.

"Formal introduction into the church was by baptism, and the 'Lord's Supper' was monthly administered, according to the usual practice of the Independents, either by the missionaries or the native pastors. I felt very strongly that if my going out to live amongst them should make a division in the churches and lead to the establishment of another sect, I had much better stay at home. The course I should pursue when there was a very serious question to me long before I went out, and, as thou mayst suppose, was the subject of much earnest prayer and thought.

My previous mental and religious training had in many ways prepared me for the consideration of this question. I was convinced that there was no form of church government or church policy laid down in the New Testament to be uniformly adopted in every country and every age ; that such arrangements as are necessary for the hearty co-operation of a company of believers in the work of their Lord, and for their own discipline and edification, may vary much according to circumstances ; and that the Holy Spirit is ever present with the Church to give help and guidance when required. I regarded Baptism and the Supper as originally partaking of the nature of arrangements of this non-permanent character ; and, after many years of uncertainty, I had come, not only to firmly hold this opinion, but also to believe with Friends that the erroneous teaching often connected with these rites, the gross superstitions that were attached to them by many, the very great difference of opinion in regard to them amongst the various denominations, and the contrast between the mode of their observance, now and in apostolic days, together with other important considerations, more than warranted our early Friends in the entire disuse of them.

“As these were settled opinions before the thought of going to Madagascar was seriously entertained by me, it very much simplified the question as to what would be my duty with regard to these things, when it came before me, not in a theoretical, but in a truly practical form. . . I found after I arrived that my non-observance of the Supper practically

made no difference at all. Some may think that if we allow the native teachers and pastors to administer these rites we might as well observe them ourselves. But we have nothing to do with *allowing*. These customs were established in the native churches long before we had any connection with them, and though we feel restrained from observing them ourselves, we feel equally restrained from using our influence to put a stop to their observance by others. We believe that our quiet testimony has had a very beneficial influence in preventing a superstitious regard for them, and we are very thankful that the controversial spirit, which difference of opinion sometimes lamentably engenders, has been, I think I may say, altogether prevented.

"You will at once see how different your circumstances are from ours. You have to begin at the very beginning and have to 'feel your way' in many respects. I have also in large measure to turn my thoughts away from our methods in Madagascar and try to place myself in your position, in order, if it may be, to give you helpful counsel.

"Doing so, I would say:—

"(1.) Do not be in any haste to organise. Your first duty is to preach the Gospel, to draw to Christ, to seek to extend His Kingdom, and to teach those who incline to follow Him what the manner of His Kingdom is, as He Himself did in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the teachings recorded in the Gospels.

"(2.) It may assist you to remember that our Lord made no attempt to organise His followers

during the three years of His ministry in Palestine. He did indeed select twelve apostles to be continually with Him ; and as you see the fruits of the Spirit manifested in those who listen to you, you may, with God's guidance, ask for help from one and another, without anything like church membership. We read of nothing like registered membership among Friends for many years after George Fox began to preach.

"(3.) Let the outward profession of Christianity be that following of Christ, that open confession of Him in all the life and conversation, which we are all called upon to make, rather than any special badge to which undue importance may be attached ; as was the case with Baptism in the early Church before many years had elapsed ; as the adoption of the plain dress and language was often regarded by a generation later than the early Friends.

"(4.) As to the arrangements for drawing the people together for the preaching of the Gospel, and for religious worship, whilst very careful to avoid all stereotyped form, I should incline to such methods as are in common use among the different religious bodies now working in China, to which no objection arises, in order that you may not appear as wishing to start some new religion or sect. It is very important that the converts attached to the numerous religious bodies should be struck by the breadth of union that exists among you all in the glorious gospel of our Lord, and not have their attention continually arrested by *differences* on minor points. And on the other hand,

where there are differences of opinion and practice, it is very teaching to them to see those who do thus differ, working together in true brotherly harmony.

"I don't see that I can say much more that will be of service at present. It will be some time before there will be any occasion for you to make a list of members. I repeat again what I strongly feel, let nothing tempt you to be in haste to organise and make some outward distinction between Christian and heathen. Let each convert do that himself by personal devotion to Christ and obedience to His commands in the daily life. Probably to each will come some crisis at an early period in his Christian life, when by some overt act he may be called upon openly to acknowledge his loyalty to Christ. But what that act will be may vary according to temperament, position, occupation or other circumstances. Don't be in haste to fix on any particular act to be observed by all.

"I feel that I ought to add as to your dependence on native Christians. Of course you will be dependent on one or two of them, not only to assist you in learning the language, but also in teaching others, both in public and private. And these, having been taught that Baptism and the Supper are ordinances of Christ, will retain these opinions and wish to teach them to others. You will not wish to get into frequent arguments with your teachers on these points. If you can persuade them to be silent on the subject while teaching others it will be a great help to you, and I think you should aim at this. An occasional quiet

conversation with them in this direction can do no harm, and whilst you maintain your own ground and at the same time show by your hearty fellowship with Christians of other denominations that neither baptism availeth anything, nor non-baptism, 'but faith that worketh by love,' but 'a new creature,' but 'keeping the commandments of God,' you will work no division nor in any way spoil the harmony that should exist among all God's true-born children in China. . . . If you are fully persuaded in your own minds to seek the needful guidance, I feel sure you will be preserved from harm on the right hand and on the left, and your simple faithfulness may in the course of years prove a great blessing."

IV.

MADAGASCAR. PART II.

JOSEPH SEWELL and Louis and Sarah Street sailed from Southampton on March 8th, 1867, reaching Port Louis, Mauritius, on May 5th, from whence they went by bullock vessel, which was then the usual mode of transit, on to Tamatave, arriving on the 19th. Their journey ended on June 1st, when they reached Antananarivo, where they were most heartily welcomed by the members of the L.M.S. staff. The house of one of their number, the Rev. R. G. Hartley, who was at that time absent in Natal, was placed at their disposal until they should fix on their own place of abode.

The voyage had been tedious and uneventful. J. S. Sewell describes their two most interesting fellow-passengers as being a Dean of the Church of England who was a friend, but not, theologically, an admirer, of Dean Stanley, and a Colonel, who had been in the Crimea and had travelled all over Egypt, India and the United States. They frequently discussed Friends' views, the man of war confessing that he was ashamed of the low moral tone expected of soldiers, saying, "When I get my regimentals on I feel like a hired

assassin." Both loathed and detested with a perfect hatred the name of John Bright !!! But, in spite of J. S. Sewell's emphatic declaration of his admiration and enthusiasm for that statesman, they continued to be unfailingly pleasant and courteous in all their intercourse with him. The consideration and kindness shown to him by persons with such diametrically opposite views led Joseph Sewell, for his part to regret that he had not similar ease of manner, and to speculate as to whether Friends, in their determination to be sincere and honest, had not missed something by their disregard of some of the more superficial social courtesies which add so much smoothness to daily life.

Faravohitra, where Mr. Hartley's house was situated, lies to the north, and was at that time the resort of robbers and many bad characters. It had been until recently the place of public execution and had a very bad name. Now, it is altogether different; most of the missionaries, whether L.M.S. or F.F.M.A.,* live there, besides many other Europeans,—mostly French. A great many native houses have been built, and it is almost the most popular part of the capital.

The difficulties of the language and of the grammar, or rather, lack of grammar, were the greatest drawbacks to any active work at first. There was such crying need for help in the schools, that, after Joseph Sewell had been six weeks in the capital, we find him visiting one of them in order to see if he could in any way assist. He thus describes this early experience :—

* The year after J. S. S. went to Madagascar, the "Provisional Committee" was merged in the Friends' Foreign Mission Association.

"There were about forty or fifty children with only a boy of fourteen or fifteen, who was younger than some of his pupils, in charge. There were no desks and but few forms. Those engaged in writing were sprawling about at their full length on the floor. Others, squatting on the ground, were tackling the alphabet, whilst a good number had neither book nor slate nor anything else from which to learn. There was certainly an entire absence of order, but, so far as I could see, no wilful disorder."

The boy teacher, as soon as he saw Joseph Sewell, collected the children together for him to address them; but that was impossible. He was only able to signify that he had come to see what they were doing, and would like them to continue at their work. Then, finding some engaged in sums, he thought he could take a simple arithmetic class, without resort to language beyond his capacities, and at once had about twenty boys gathered round him. J. S. Sewell continues:—

"Having spent half an hour or more, with no little merriment both to the children and myself, one source of amusement being to see them count on their toes instead of their fingers, it was proposed that the higher class should read to me. This, again, I concluded was within my power, as I could at least hear them read, and, though unable to correct their pronunciation, they might probably teach me. Many were very fluent. The New Testament was the book, and I longed to ask them a few questions, but that was quite out of my power. Then the time came for the school to separate. My young friend called for

silence ; the children drew near him and sat down covering their faces ; he offered a very short prayer during which the children sat perfectly still, and then all left the chapel. I went home feeling more cheery than I had done for several days ; I had found work I could do."

This last remark is characteristic of Joseph Sewell. He could not bear to stand idle doing nothing, nor did he wait until he could do a thing perfectly, but cheerfully and humbly did his best.

Of this early time, the Rev. W. E. Cousins says :—

"In his efforts to instruct more fully the pupils gathered round him, Mr. Sewell found it necessary to improve existing lesson books and to prepare new ones. He gave much attention to the teaching of English ; and to help his pupils prepared an English-Malagasy Dictionary of 379 pages. To him belongs the honour of having written the first book to teach the people something about the grammar of their own language. This little work was a revelation to many, bringing before them things they had never dreamed of. That there should be such a thing as the science of language, and that, in the speech they had been unconsciously using day by day, a wonderful order and arrangement could be pointed out, filled many with amazement. The study of grammar became for a time quite fashionable, and many middle-aged men, even, joined grammar classes in order to study it. As the laws of language began to dawn upon their intelligence, and what had seemed but a chaos of miscellaneous words was seen to fall into beautiful order, many would

exclaim, 'Dear me, what wonderful people our ancestors must have been to arrange all this!'

"It seemed to them that there must have been in the far-off past some great Kabary [assembly of the peoples], and that the fathers of the nation had solemnly declared that such and such should be the forms of verbs, nouns, pronouns, etc. Mr. Sewell's book is no longer in use, I think; but it did honourable pioneer work, and prepared the way for the fuller grammar that came later.

"Literary work seemed a necessity to Mr. Sewell, and his pen was constantly employed. I find more than a dozen entries under his name in Mr. Sibree's Bibliography. Some of his hymns are still used and are much loved by the native Christians, notably his translation of 'Abide with Me,' and 'Whither, Pilgrim, art thou Going?'

"Not many months passed after Mr. Sewell's arrival before he had gained sufficient knowledge of the language to begin speaking in public. He was a careful and thoughtful student of the Bible, and had been accustomed to speak frequently in the services at Hitchin. It is not wonderful then that when cast among a people so much in need of instruction he could not be content to remain silent. But in these early attempts his principles as a Friend were sorely put to the test. Not only addresses but prayers had to be prepared, and the very words had to be carefully sought out and written down. I used sometimes to talk with him about this, and to ask him whether the Holy Spirit could not as truly help us in

our quiet study and preparation as in the actual utterance of words in the public service. He did not allow these difficulties to hinder him, however, but, accepting the inevitable, he set about his work in the only way practicable ; and having made a start, he soon gained a fair command of the language, and became a very acceptable preacher. He never became quite at home in the native language ; he began too late for that ; but his quiet, reverent, and forcible way of speaking carried great weight, and the native Christians soon recognised his power and learned to regard him as one who possessed such a knowledge, both of the Scriptures and of the spiritual realities of which they treat, as to render him a guide they might with confidence follow. He became known among them as 'Ingahibe Soelina,' 'Old Mr. Sewell,' [only the native words seem to carry more of affection and familiarity than their English equivalent] and to this day, though it is twenty-five years since he left the island, his sayings and doings are still remembered and spoken of.

" But perhaps in no way was Mr. Sewell's spiritual influence more felt than in our Friday evening prayer meetings, in which he took a deep interest and from which he was rarely absent. To many of us, for many years, these hours spent together at the close of a week's work have been a time of refreshing and a preparation for new work : and in Mr. Sewell we had one whose whole heart was full of the spiritual side of the work, and who made it his daily habit to bring before God every aspect of the work itself, and

all the needs and weaknesses of the workers. To unite in prayer with such a comrade could not fail to deepen our spiritual life and to keep alive a spirit of hopefulness as to the great work in which we were engaged. These Friday evening meetings are, happily, still carried on, and the members of the two Missions continue thus to strengthen one another's hands in God.

"In social intercourse, also, we had in Mr. Sewell a bright and helpful friend. He was not morose and austere, but full of sunny cheerfulness, and he was a true and most sympathetic friend in time of sorrow or difficulty. I lived quite near him during most of the time he was in Madagascar, and we were accustomed to talk over all kinds of questions. I had some advantages owing to my longer residence in the country, but he brought stores of experience and knowledge which his ten years' seniority had given him. I look back upon my friendship with him as one of the most helpful things I can recall in those years of my missionary life."

A member of the F.F.M.A. says :—

"It was probably this tireless determination to devote all his energies to the good of the Malagasy which made his influence much out of proportion to the time he spent in the island."

He was a tireless organiser as well as teacher. The discipline of Ackworth and Rawdon, as well as the hard work at Kirkstall, all helped him now. Habitually methodical and systematic, the struggle against an equally natural tendency to lethargy and dilatori-

ness had been fought and won years before. He might be both more cautious and less apt than many men, but he had a large share of that gift of true wisdom and of insight into character. His patience with the most tedious of native visitors or inquirers seems to have struck his co-workers; nothing was too trivial for his kindly sympathy.

It was not, however, solely to become a school-master in Madagascar that Joseph Sewell had broken away from the strong ties which bound him to his home. He at first visited one church and another, but as his power of speaking Malagasy increased, he felt it right to attach himself to some particular one which might need help. He was most attracted to the one at Ambohitantely. It was weak and unsettled, with fewer members than the others. His position was what a Friend would regard as that of an overseer rather than a minister.

The L.M.S. staff were, as ever, ready to look at the earnestness and sincerity of his motives, not imputing, as some might have done, a desire for power or rivalry. When he visited the congregation to explain that he wished to unite with them and help them so far as he could, Mr. W. E. Cousins accompanied him and interpreted for him. Though his remarks on the ordinances were received with some astonishment, as an entirely new aspect of the subject, he never had any trouble as to his distinctive views on these matters. It is to be feared that some of the pressing invitations he had received to join this church had not been given with pure motives. There was at that time

some friction between the native pastors (there were two at Ambohitantely, and they could not always agree together), and the missionaries, owing to the obstinacy and jealousy of the natives, which had made the condition of Ambohitantely a source of grave anxiety to the L.M.S. Mission.

The difficulty of the language was great, but occasionally very amusing. J. S. Sewell tells the following story as illustrating this, for the language abounds in similar words with very different meanings:—"One earnest young missionary, when preaching about the Ten Virgins, frequently quoted in his address the words, 'Lord, Lord, open to us' ('vohay izahay'). He had found, on returning home, that by leaving out the 'h' he had been saying over and over again, 'Lord, Lord, we are crocodiles!' ('voay izahay')."

In 1868, J. S. Sewell began a class for the more advanced pupils, teaching geography and history as well as English. It was a great enjoyment to him, and the interest the scholars took in the doings of the Greeks and Romans is often alluded to in his letters. This class was the nucleus of the new school afterwards established at Ambohijatovo, opened in February, 1870.

Joseph Sewell had now embarked upon a very busy period, and for the next few years, until he was joined by other missionaries from England, he was constantly oppressed by over-work and the sense of having to leave undone much that seemed almost essential. The wise oversight of Ambohitantely, the constant watchfulness to raise the spiritual life of the church,

the daily teaching of his Malagasy boys, the preparation of lesson books as he went along, were by no means all his labours. Extensive building operations began to claim constant attention. After much delay ground had been obtained upon which to erect a dwelling-house. The reed hut where his pupils met was far too small for their needs, so a site at Ambohi-jatovo had been chosen and designs for a commodious building prepared by Mr. Poole, architect to the L.M.S., and besides this there was at Faravohitra a girls' school in the course of building. When Mr. Hartley,—who, it may be remembered, had lent his house to J.S.S. and his companions on their arrival,—had, early in 1868, to return to England owing to the serious state of his health, his wife left behind a class of about fifty girls which she had gathered together. This she begged Mrs. Street to take in charge; hence the need for a building in which to meet. This class was the beginning of the present girls' school which is filling such a useful place in the capital.

The natives seemed incapable of steady hard work, and to have somewhat elementary ideas of building, so that J. S. Sewell found it necessary to personally superintend all this work, paying a daily visit of inspection. He speaks of having to superintend the fixing of every door and window; but says that this close oversight afforded opportunity for gaining an intimate acquaintance with the habits of thought and customs of the natives as he could never have hoped to have done in church or school.

Meantime, the Native Church of Imerina* was passing through a crisis in its history. In March, 1868, Queen Rasoherina died, and Ranavalona II. was proclaimed. For a time grave fears were entertained as to her attitude with regard to the Christian religion, but, after the period of mourning for the late Queen was ended, freedom of worship was proclaimed. The coronation was an occasion of a more open declaration of Christianity. A Bible was placed at the Queen's side during the ceremony ; she and the Prime Minister both declared their intention of ruling and carrying out the laws in the fear of God. Moreover, on the canopy over the throne was inscribed in gilt letters, "Glory to God in the Highest, on Earth Peace, Goodwill to Men." This was in September. On the 20th of February, 1869, both Ranavalona and the Prime Minister were baptised.

The joy of the native Christians was intense. The missionaries, with the record of Constantine, and all the evils consequent on state religions, before their eyes, rejoiced more soberly. Christianity became the fashion. Consequently, besides the many who were at heart convinced of the impotence of their idols, but had been too timid to declare themselves adherents of Christ during the former reign, there were thousands who desired to be accounted loyal and correct, and therefore flocked to the churches proclaiming their change of faith, but had no conception of the necessary change of life. This naturally put a greatly increased

* Christianity at that time had spread little beyond the Hova race ; gradually a few of the Betsileo were coming under its influence.

burden on the missionaries. The majority of their congregations consisted of those who required to be taught the very rudiments of the Christian faith. At the same time Europeans were in great favour, and an immensely increased demand for general knowledge, resulting in increased attendances at the schools, was universal in Imerina.

The Queen being recognised as Christian, all loyal Hova wished to be taught her ways. The country districts sent urgent messages requesting teachers and pastors. This work had either to be entirely neglected or vigorously taken up. But Joseph Sewell and Louis and Sarah Street were already as fully occupied in the capital as they could well be. After much prayerful consideration they felt they dare not shirk their share of extending the knowledge of Christ beyond the capital. How earnestly they prayed for more helpers, and how frequently they laid the matter before their friends at home may be imagined, but at the time they saw no response. They could not see the band of workers God was preparing in England, and at times things looked very dark and difficult. Joseph Sewell said he just had to live one day at a time and have faith.

All the settled country churches at this time were within twenty or thirty miles of the capital. Here and there was a small handful of believers, a church left from the old days of persecution, but their leaven seemed too light to permeate the mass of heathendom around. Now, the rapid increase of members, especially after the public burning of the idols, by the

Queen's command, in August, 1869, required much careful thought. The cry came to the capital, "You have destroyed our gods ; we know not how to worship according to the New Religion. Send us teachers."

This imposed very serious responsibilities on those who had long known the Gospel. Method and system were demanded in dealing with these country congregations. Some were visited periodically by the members of the town churches from which they were offshoots ; but the need of some bond of union between all the churches in town and country, and of uniformity of action to prevent overlapping or neglect, was strongly felt. This led to the formation of a Congregational Union, or Six Months' Meeting, to which representatives from all the churches in Imerina were invited. The first conference was held in the Ambatonakanga Church in December, 1868, the chief business being the re-arrangement of the country congregations so far as their dependence on the town churches and the missionaries was concerned. In making this arrangement, nine imaginary lines were drawn from the nine town churches as a centre, radiating into the heathen land around, and each of the districts bounded by these lines was placed under the care of one of the churches.

Ambohitantly, rightly considered the smallest and the weakest of the churches, had only six country congregations appointed for its oversight. These lay in the little known western district. In this apportioning out of districts the number of the existing congregations had been considered rather than the extent of territory, and so it resulted that Ambohi-

tantly found under its care the largest area but one of any of the churches, and what was absolutely the most heathen and ignorant of the whole.

Early in January, 1869, J. S. Sewell, accompanied by a native pastor, paid a visit to these six congregations. Three he described as being in a very low condition of spiritual or moral enlightenment ; three were much better, one at Ambohidehibe was a true company of believers leavening the district round, more than a hundred persons gathering each week from the neighbouring hamlets to the church. The furthest congregation was at Arivonimamo. There was only one professing Christian there, and J. S. Sewell described the place as "utterly dark." How awful the struggle was to be before the light of Christ would finally dissolve the gross superstition and horrors of heathendom in that place, those who have read "Faithful unto Death" * will know.

The following August came a request for more teachers among the villages about three days journey to the south west of the capital. J. S. Sewell much enjoyed visiting them, for no European had ever been there before. It required all the powers of his guide (the steward of the nobleman to whom the district belonged, and a man of great influence), to get the people to listen to him at all. They feared lest he had magical and evil arts which might injure them. It was plain that there was at that time an opening for native teachers only. The Ambohitantly congre-

* The Life of W. and L. Johnson, by Phoebe Doncaster, entitled "Faithful unto Death."

gation undertook to send out seven men. The choice of suitable evangelists was a matter for deep consideration. The Malagasy were so readily swayed by secondary motives ; personal influences or a fluent tongue weighed often unduly.

By the close of the year 1869, J. S. Sewell says : " The original six congregations under our care had increased to twenty-five. Of these, ten were within three hours' walk of the capital, seven within a day's journey, the others much more difficult to reach."

A graphic picture of some of the experiences of J.S.S. in visiting these more distant churches is given in a letter written by him from Mahabo, November 23rd, 1870 :—

" You would pity me and laugh at me if you could see me just now. A most filthy house with a few clean mats spread on the floor where I am sitting, and a large lamba spread out above my head to prevent the soot, which hangs in abundance from the roof, from falling down upon me. All sorts of dirty waterpots and cooking utensils, with spades, sticks, baskets, etc., in the room. Also a hen with half a dozen elderly chickens, just gone to roost. In addition, and more to be dreaded when night comes, some three or four rats, which I have just seen, are running about on the floor and on the mats above my head. I am sitting on a low stool I take with me, with a tin case containing pictures of Scripture scenes on my knee for a table. But I am very comfortable in it all, partly from feeling that a blessing has rested on previous journeys and that help has been given me already in this, and partly

from the comfort it is to be sitting quietly in this house, which is vastly superior to the place I was in last night and the night before. Only I dread the rats, for I have already lost a great part of the upper leather of both my boots from the rats at Ambohifonitrimo, and I shall have to take great care lest I lose something else to-night. . . . It seems a curious kind of progress that is developing, coming mainly from the influence of the leading men, in the first place, and yet it is wonderful to see how the disposition and habits of the people become gradually changed. The time spent in travelling during the last three days has been especially pleasant ; the country is wild and yet in places very beautiful, with its green slopes, fine streams edged with ferns, and rugged boulders. I have been busy making myself acquainted with the forms and names of the mountains, hoping to be able to send home a more satisfactory map than my last."

To quote again from J. S. Sewell :—

" Even the true Christians among the Malagasy had at this time very little understanding of what was going on. Their religion was of the simplest character ; they regarded the great difficulties in the way of the spread of Christianity as already overcome ; they knew nothing of the warnings given in Church history, and were elated with what they saw. Then again, the nominal Christians, whose numbers had much increased of late, looked at things from an altogether wrong point of view. It required no little wisdom and tact on the part of the missionary to bring into some order the various elements of power

under his influence, so that the action of the churches should tend to God's glory and the advancement of His Kingdom. It required great watchfulness to prevent roots of future evil springing up here and there to mar the good work."

After two and a half years of what Joseph Sewell calls "preparation," 1870 opened with the schoolrooms at Ambohijatovo and Faravohitra ready for the admission of scholars, with arrangements made for the visiting of country congregations, and with school-books that had been long on the way finished. "We entered upon the year in the spirit of those who had overcome the bustle of preparation for a journey and glad to be freed from previous anxieties, anticipating lighter and more enjoyable occupations. The reality, however, was not altogether such as had been anticipated. At the close of 1869 there were about sixty boys and as many girls taught in our poor reed sheds. We had room for little less than two hundred in each of our new schools. A charge of threepence* per month was made for the boys' school; entrance into the girls' school was not restricted by any payment. The number of boys was at first little increased, but men, from sixteen to forty years of age, crowded to learn. More than one hundred had their names entered, all of whom wanted to learn English. I had only three native assistants capable, so I had to break up my first class and turn some of them to teaching men old enough to be their fathers. I did not like to do this at all; they were sadly too young.

* This would buy as much food as eighteenpence or two shillings in England.

The men also were disappointed ; they had hoped I should be their teacher, but they soon saw that was impossible, and that the youths knew far more than they did, and on the whole showed far more aptitude for the work than I had anticipated. But what shall I say of the confusion, perplexity, worry and noise of the first few weeks of school work ? ”

In a letter home, February 13th, 1870, he says :—

“ I have on the register 170 names. There is little I could do this week beyond roughly classifying them. I have the names of thirty or forty more who hope to come next month, but I fear we shall not have room. In common talk, the opening of the school would be called a complete success, but how with my poor tools I am to carry it on I cannot tell. I have tried to get our Norwegian friends to help me, but they have altogether declined. Louis has just gone into the country again for a few weeks, so that I am quite left to my own resources. I should think that more than half of the one hundred men are preachers, so you see what a responsibility there is resting on me and what there is to be done. It has been strengthening to me the last few days, as I see what things have come to, to feel that there is not one point on which I should wish to retrace my steps since I came here. Though often walking in the dark, unable to see more than one step before me, I feel sure God has been guiding me, and I can trust Him for what is to come. But, ah, how it would please me if our next letters were to bring tidings of some one coming out to help us.”*

* Eight months later such good news did come.

"March 7th. I have need of some energy to-day, for oh, the numbers of people who have been to beg me to let them come to school! People have been coming nearly all the day whilst I have been at home, and I am quite tired of it. Those that are at the school appear much pleased with the teaching they get. To me it seems a very unsatisfactory muddle among such a crowd, close pressed as we are, and with so few conveniences for teaching."

Of the opening of the school, the Rev. W. E. Cousins writes :—

"Ambohijatovo signifies 'youths' village,' and it seems specially appropriate that such a building should be placed there. Before the opening, Mr. Sewell issued a handbill explaining clearly his aims and plans. The conclusion of his remarks may be quoted, as they are so eminently characteristic of the man; for patience, thoroughness and kindness marked all his work. He summed up his statement in these three sentences :—

"(1). I intend all who come to this school to be well grounded in the elements of sound learning.

"(2). I intend to help its scholars to climb the hill of knowledge, but I do not intend to carry them.

"(3). I expect all who learn in this school to mount gradually, as in going up a ladder, and I shall make no attempt to place them suddenly at the top."

The establishment, about this time, of the L.M.S. Institute for training preachers had given a fresh stimulus to education, and the hope of being afterwards admitted to it had been one of the inducements to enter the school. One of those who entered at

this time is well known to members of the F.F.M.A., viz: "Frank," who, with Rasoa, accompanied J. S. Sewell to England in 1871, and was with him for some time at the Friends' School at York. Of them J. S. Sewell writes:—

"May 1st, 1870. I must tell you a little plan I have in my mind, though it may never be realised. I have a boy about thirteen years old who comes from Vonizongo. He has progressed so rapidly and is altogether so nice a boy that I have become much attached to him. When I came home from my last country visit about a fortnight ago, he had been quite ill; the doctor was afraid of disease of the heart, and has forbidden school for two months. I am anxious to save the dear boy's life if any nursing of ours can do it, and have proposed that he should sleep and board with us; he would thus be spared a long uphill walk to the school twice a day. His father is a truly good man. He is fond of his boy and very warmly attached to him, but I do not know how he will take to our proposal. L. and S. Street have both entered heartily into it, and I long to know whether we are to have him or not. Another of my best boys is in the hospital. Several young men have joined the class this year who have had much longer teaching in English, but my first boy, Rasoa, still takes precedence of them all. How I should enjoy showing England to them! I sometimes query whether to finish up with two or three years in a good English school might not qualify them for very important service in their own country."

Another of these boys, Rasoamanana, now Malagasy

Head-master at Ambohijatovo, and almost the only one still in the school who was there when Joseph Sewell had the care of it, sends the following testimony to the value of J. S. Sewell's work there :—

“According to my belief, Ambohijatovo would never have been established if God had not brought Joseph Sewell to Madagascar. He was not a young man when he came here, and we might almost say that Ambohijatovo was established by an old man. Those young men, clever, of good conduct, teachers in the schools, pastors of churches, engaged in the Government Offices,—where have they come from? The majority have come from Ambohijatovo, for they have learnt there; and it was Mr. Sewell and no one else who began this school. God honoured him in enabling him to open up this fountain of knowledge; and for many long years, until our children's children of many generations, we may believe that this fountain will still be giving out the waters of knowledge.

“J. S. S. was very patient in his conduct of Ambohijatovo; he was not, however, too weak in this, not at all, because if anyone deserved to be rebuked for anything wrong he did, then he rebuked him. He was always willing to help boys in any way he could; and when boys came to him to consult him he did not think it waste of time to do what he could to help them, but he would talk with them alone, do all he could to assist them; this was a real pleasure to him. Although he was getting into years, and although he had much to do with and for adults, and although he had much church business to do, whether in town or

country, he was always ready to help the young. Some called him 'the old man who was the friend of the young.'

"Another thing he did was to help in the establishing of the Sunday School at Ambohitovo, in 1874. That was the first regular one that was established; scholars came to it from all the churches in town; it was not an F.F.M.A. school. There used to be 600 scholars in it at one time; and then from this, Sunday Schools began in all the churches in the city. But this one at Ambohitovo is still carried on successfully, and there are now 200 scholars in it. The teachers are all Malagasy, though sometimes a lady missionary comes and teaches the first class of girls.

"The school at Ambohitovo in former days was noted for two things; one was the teaching of English, and the other was the teaching of Scripture, and these two were what J. S. S. was most earnest about at first. The knowledge that many obtained in English they have still retained; and it still does them a deal of good, as it enables them to read English books and obtain for themselves the treasures in them. Then, Mr. Sewell had a most interesting way of teaching Scripture truth, and the boys eagerly listened to him. And from that time to the present it is thought to be the most important subject taught at Ambohitovo."

"Frank" also writes of this time as follows:—

"Mr. Sewell did not only take the oversight of the work but taught a good deal himself, for he had the faculty of making his lessons very interesting, especially the Bible lessons and those on Roman History

and Geography. He had a store of most interesting anecdotes which he told to his pupils at the end of the lessons, so that they were never tired of listening to him. After a few years the people at the capital came to see what a good and substantial education was given at Ambohijatovo, so they became very wishful to send their boys there, and ever since that time it has been the most popular educational establishment in the capital."

V.

MADAGASCAR. PART III.

“EVER since Joseph S. Sewell finally left the island in 1876 I have always been surprised at the amount of work he was able to accomplish during the comparatively short time he was here ; this was only nine years, really only eight, as during one of these years he was in England. This fact has also very much struck many of the Malagasy. The wonder was how he was able to accomplish all he did ; both the physical and mental strain upon him must have been very great. The thought and care involved in the establishment of the mission upon its present basis must have been intense, especially at particular times. And it must be remembered that for four years he was practically alone ; for though Louis Street was there his line of service was mostly in very different channels.

“ Yet it was in these four years that the foundation of the present work of the F.F.M.A. in the island was laid ; during that time Ambohitatovo was built and opened, and the Ambohitantely Church, with the country district attached, was taken over by the F.F.M.A., though the arrangement with regard to the latter was only formally completed in 1871, after the arrival of some other missionaries from England.

"Truly it is given to very few to do what he was enabled to accomplish during these eight years. His patience was inexhaustible, or seemed so to us who then saw him at his work. He laid his plans—after, of course, very earnest prayer for guidance,—and he did his best to carry them out ; but if he found that things would not go as he wished or as he would like, he did not fret or lose heart ; he had done his best and so he could wait for a more favourable time for carrying out his purposes.

"When he finally left, the great question in the minds of those of us who remained, was, 'What shall we do without him ? However can the work of the the Mission be carried on ?' Yet his leaving, much as it was felt by us, was not without its advantage ; we had to rely upon our own resources, and had to take the responsibility upon our own shoulders, each in his or her different departments. Two people can never do the same work in exactly the same way ; I remember very well indeed how the people from the district used to come to me after he had gone, and say, 'Mr. Sewell did not do in that way, but *this* is how he did, and as he did so we think you should do.' What has been must be done again ; what one missionary does the one who follows him must do ; this is a thought very deep down in the heart of the Malagasy."

The above extract from a letter of H. E. Clark's seems a fitting introduction to the later stage of J. S. Sewell's work in Madagascar. It was in the few months before other workers arrived that he devoted

much thought to the position of the F.F.M.A. in the island. He had seen his labour blessed beyond expectation, his desires for fellow-workers fulfilled, but their very fulfilment caused him to be mindful of the slight hold the Society of Friends had on missionary enterprise in Madagascar. Louis and Sarah Street, as well as himself, had all been received and welcomed on their own individual merits rather than as representatives of a Society. The near arrival of more Friends made others besides himself aware that if they were to work there the Mission must become not individual but representative of an organisation. The first chapter of Friends' work in the island was drawing to a close; were they to be encouraged or thwarted in the new development of their labours? After nearly four years' work, he felt that the informal relationship which had subsisted between the L.M.S. and himself required readjusting if more Friends settled there. The extension of the districts pointed to the establishment of missionaries in the outlying villages, whilst several little things showed him how slight, if he were to leave the island, was the hold of the F.F.M.A. on the Ambohitantely Church and district.

Such being the case, he decided to lay the matter before the L.M.S. Committee in Antananarivo, suggesting that the F.F.M.A. should in future be responsible for this portion of Imerina. After very friendly conference with the missionaries in the capital, he was urged to send them a letter on the subject, explaining why he desired a more permanent

and independent organisation for the F.F.M.A. which might form the basis of communication with the Directors in London. He pointed out in this letter the growth of the church and district of Ambohitantely, and the need for as many workers as possible, continuing :—

“ I trust that what you have seen of us during the four years we have been workers with you has been sufficient to prove that nothing is further from our intentions than to create a schism in the Malagasy Church. The natives well know that on some points our views differ from yours, but they see us all working together in harmony, they see us sitting side by side with you at the Union Meetings, and taking part in the general business of the Churches, so that I trust that hitherto our coming here has produced nothing having a tendency to cause divisions or profitless discussions. I thank you for the confidence you have reposed in us, and I sincerely hope that, as our part in the Mission increases, nothing may destroy this harmony, or lessen your confidence. But that this may be the case, there must be mutual forbearance and, in some respects, mutual giving up. And so long as you and we have for our chief object the true welfare of the people amongst whom we live I feel sure neither party will be wanting in forbearance.”

After drawing attention to the vast district and few missionaries ; to the sense of work incompleted, which the lack of labourers involved, he goes on to say :—
“ These considerations make me feel that in order to obtain fresh labourers from the Society of Friends and

to increase their interest in the work and stimulate them to renewed effort, few things will prove more successful than to put before them the consideration that a large district in this island is to a certain extent under their charge, and looks to them for teaching and religious instruction. This would I believe in no sense interfere with your work. If you have missionaries to spare, by all means take up the unoccupied portions of the Ambohitantely District. What I ask for is, that so long that this is not the case, we may be permitted to supply that district with the help it needs so far as it lies in our power. . . . I have only to say in conclusion, that in case of your encouraging us to carry out the plans I have laid before you, I should propose that the money needed to assist in the building of new chapels should come from us, that in drawing up the annual statistics, our District should appear with the others, that we should by all means continue to be represented in the Half Yearly Union Meetings, and that there should be as little distinction as possible in the eyes of the natives between us."

This opened the way for the formal recognition of the F.F.M.A. as co-workers with the L.M.S., the agreement being adopted in 1871. The Rev. W. E. Cousins refers to this subject as follows :—

"It was undoubtedly owing to Mr. Sewell's character and his broad unsectarian spirit that the arrangement under which the F.F.M.A. took over the care of the Ambohitantely Church and District became possible. I cannot forget the courtesy and patience

and unselfishness shown by him during all the preliminary consultations rendered necessary in planning this arrangement, which, I believe, is almost unique in missionary annals. I was at the time Secretary to the District Committee, and in conjunction with Mr. Sewell drew up the draft of the agreement which remains to this day the basis of the friendly and harmonious co-operation of the two Societies."

The following minutes of the Directors of the L.M.S. show how heartily they united with their brethren in Madagascar :—

" January, 1872. [a]. That the Directors express their high appreciation of the character of Mr. Sewell and of his uniform catholicity of spirit and cordial co-operation with the Society's missionaries during his residence in Madagascar, especially since he came into more close connection with them, by taking charge of the congregation at Ambohitantely and of the district connected with that church.

[b]. That in view of the satisfactory co-operation of the members of the F.F.M.A. with the missionaries of this Society in Madagascar, the Directors cordially accept the proposal of the F.F.M.A. that the supervision of the congregation and district of Ambohitantely, which has been recently carried on by a member of their Association, be continued as heretofore under the general conditions laid down in the minute of the Madagascar District Committee."

When other members of the F.F.M.A. joined him, J. S. Sewell withdrew from much of the directly edu-

cational work, though his interest in the printing press, which probably but for him would not have been established, was continuous. He served on the Bible Revision Committee for one year, and was a member (by invitation) of the educational Sub-committee of L.M.S. Imerina District. He retained the oversight of Ambohitantely, and its Sunday School was very near his heart. His energies, however, were more centred on the extension of missionary work, especially in the Mandridrano district, where the need for teachers seemed very great. In 1875, with Mr. Pickersgill of the L.M.S., he paid a visit to the Sakalava territory, and always maintained a deep interest in that people. For the account of this visit we are indebted to H. E. Clark :—

“ Very soon after taking over the charge of the district, now for long under the care of the F.F.M.A., which stretches out for many miles to the south-west of the capital, did the thoughts of J. S. Sewell go out to the Great Sakalava Tribe beyond the then ‘ no man’s land ’ ;—the one thought in his mind being, ‘ How and when shall the Gospel be brought to these wild tribes ? ’ whose territory he could dimly discern from the western border of our district. There was also a further thought, ‘ Was it not, or would it not be the work and duty of the F.F.M.A. to be the means of taking the Gospel to them ? ’ He had for years felt a great desire to visit that territory before he left the island, and in 1875 that wish was gratified, when, in the company of Mr. Pickersgill, he paid a visit to the two large and important towns of Imanandaza and

Ankavandra, as well as some other less known places. On his return his account of the journey was printed and published for private circulation. It is worth while quoting the conclusions to which he had come, in which I believe his companion united :—

“ ‘So far for our journey, which we have always regarded as merely exploratory and introductory to future work, not as something complete in itself. Our object was to gain information as to the state of the people and the country, and the prospect for missionary work there. Now, on our return, we can give it as our decided opinion that in the places we visited a door is open to us among the Sakalava. Whether that door shall prove to be “great and effectual,” or not, is yet to be seen, but there is no doubt that there are many adversaries.

“ ‘Any missionary labouring among the Sakalava will have one very serious difficulty to contend with, of which we who labour among the Hova hardly know anything ; the advantage we thus possess can hardly be over-estimated. For among the Hova, strong drink has been hitherto prohibited, and thus they have to a very large extent been preserved from the temptations incident to it. Very different is the state of things among the Sakalava. *Toaka* (native rum) is considered by them almost as much a necessity of life as rice itself. To abstain from drinking *toaka* is to them worse than the bearing of any disease that may be cured by such abstinence. If they bring presents to their tribal chiefs they are regarded as greatly remiss if *toaka* is not among their offerings.

They speak of three things which would have to be given up if they were to become Christians, and they are exceedingly unwilling to part from any one of them, viz :—drinking *toaka*, fighting, and polygamy. Long may these impressions last with regard to the inconsistency of the whole three with Christianity. As to polygamy they are even in a lower condition than probably the Hova ever were. Their women do most of the work in the fields as well as in the house, the men being engaged in hunting and fighting. They therefore think it would be very hard for a man to have only one wife to do his work. It is not uncommon for a man to have from ten to fifteen. Infanticide is fearfully common ; any child born on Tuesday, and some say on Sunday, is cast away. A common practice is to dig a hole in one of the large ant-hills that abound in these parts, and there to lay the poor helpless infant.

“ As well as this there is a bitter hatred of the Hova on the part of the Sakalava, as well as a continual fear of false play at their hands, which will probably for many years prevent their receiving the truths of the Gospel from them. This doubtless increases the difficulties in the way of their instruction. Yet, as I have already said, notwithstanding the many adversaries, the door is open, and we must try to enter.”

Then follow many suggestions as to the employment of native evangelists, etc. Also an account of the different tribes of the Sakalava, quarrels between whom necessitated great care that the missionaries should not attempt to unite churches of neighbouring

towns if of different tribes, but should make themselves acquainted with the internal politics of this great region. He continues :—

“ Perhaps some will say, ‘ Is it wise for us—L.M.S. and F.F.M.A.—who have already so much on our hands in teaching the Hova and Betsileo, and who have to leave undone so much we would most willingly do, for want of time and means—is it wise for us to be attempting to extend our work among the Sakalava ? While so much remains to be done in other parts of the island, is anyone warranted in running the risks that must be run by those who live among the Sakalava ? Who can undertake this work ? ’—Questions like these will certainly be asked by many, not only here, but in England, nor can we deny that they are worth considering. Yet when we remember that the work of evil is progressing among the Sakalava, and is apparently decidedly increasing in power ; when we remember too that many whose object is simply to gain money, willingly run the risks that a missionary would have to encounter, and that the influence of such is generally on the side of evil ; when we look also at the great blessings already received by the Hova, and the rapid development of their power to help themselves, we ought not to be blind to the present condition of the more heathen Sakalava tribes, but carefully consider where our duty lies with regard to them. These few suggestions I have made will not greatly increase our work at present, but they will serve to bring us into more immediate contact with the Sakalava, and, with God’s blessing, as we

seek to watch the pointings of His finger and to move in the direction to which He points, they may lead by a sure path to incalculable blessings in the future."

Mr. Pickersgill also wrote an account of this journey for the "Malagasy Annual," Christmas, 1877, entitled, "From Twilight to Gross Darkness." Two extracts will suffice :—

"There were two of us. One was a hale grey-headed Friend, carrying a small tripod and a trap to catch mountain-tops with, strapped to the side of his palanquin. In his heart he carried a most sleepless determination to make a map of the route. As for the other, he was not without concern for the mountain-tops, seeing that he generally helped to bag them, but he also had a rather keen interest in smaller game, and cherished slaughterous intentions respecting all wild cattle, birds and skulking beasts. No Quarterly Meeting would have selected him as a suitable travelling companion for the F.F.M.A.'s senior representative in Madagascar. But there was unbroken good fellowship throughout the journey, notwithstanding. For the bond of union was a warm desire to find entrance for Light among the darkened Sakalava ; and the younger traveller learnt something of patience and faithful zeal from daily contact with their living power ; whilst the good Quaker gradually grew reconciled to the company of loaded firearms in the tent, and once or twice, I believe, when our larder was reduced to a gravyless drumstick, inwardly wished one a chance of rejoicing in bloodshed."

Writing from a village where they were staying for the night, Mr. Pickersgill says :—

“ It was nearly eight o'clock when we left Imiadanarivo and only four in the afternoon when we came to the end of our journey, although two hours were spent in shooting on the road. There are clouds of ducks upon the marshes here, and I know not to what proportion our game bag might have swelled had the men not seen a crocodile,—nobody would fetch the birds after that. Let me be careful on this occasion to guard my hale old friend from all suspicion of being a participator in these wanton pleasures. He was otherwise occupied. And now I'll be revenged on him for not taking more interest in the sport. This is where and how I found him. He was comfortably seated beneath a shady tree near a Sakalava village, eating his dinner in the focus of an admiring circle of highly-ornamented women-folk, who seemed quite fascinated by the cheerful spectacle, for when I happened to sit down so as to shut out their view, they immediately shifted to another point of observation from which they could gaze as before. The object of their undisguised admiration now responded by giving them each a biscuit. Think of that, ye Quarterly Meetings ! Of course I was naturally led to be similarly gallant, and added a little jam ; and our servants said, ‘ Eat, ladies.’ Such is the force of example.”

H. E. Clark's letter continues :—

“ Since this visit of J. S. Sewell to the Sakalava tribe the subject of bringing the Gospel to them has con-

tinually been in our minds. Two or three other visits to them have been paid by missionaries, and it may be truly said that there has been an increasing desire that our mission may be used by God in bringing the Gospel to that wild tribe, or to those wild tribes, for there are many of them. The churches under the care of the F.F.M.A. have warmly taken up the subject and very considerable sums have been subscribed year by year for the purpose of sending native evangelists to them. Several have from time to time been so sent ; these have remained for longer or shorter periods. The two French Wars were very disturbing elements in this work, but since the occupation by the French and the consequent settlement of the country, the work has been again taken up by the churches. Two evangelists are now* at work on the borders of the Sakalava territory, and another is soon to be sent into the heart of the district.

"According to appearances we do not seem any nearer the time when an English missionary may be sent to live among them, but this is still an end kept in view. Travelling in those parts is very much easier and safer than it was in former days. May we not hope that the publishing of this memoir of him who was the first of the F.F.M.A. to visit that still very dark portion of Madagascar, may be the means, under God, of arousing the interest of some in the Sakalava and of leading them to enter the door into this territory which is already open. May it be so, as God shall see good. Amen."

* Written March, 1901.

In June, 1876, Joseph S. Sewell returned to England. Both the daughters who had accompanied him on his second visit to the island in 1872, were married; the elder, Lucy, to William Johnson, immediately on their arrival in Madagascar. Her devoted life and death are beautifully described in "Faithful unto Death." The younger daughter, Alice Mary, had just married James C. Thorne, of the L.M.S., and it appeared as if she, as well as her sister, had been called to many years of happy, useful, missionary labour. That her life would be cut short in less than a year was hidden from the eyes of those who loved her and rejoiced in her happiness. But J. S. Sewell felt that the claim of the dearly-loved invalid daughter left at home called him back. Moreover, since his last visit to England he had been cheered by the hope that, when his service in Madagascar should be closed, the friend who had, through the darkest days of his life, upheld and strengthened him by her wise sympathy, might become his closest companion and his wife.

Before he left, there was, however, one task that called for all his courage and wisdom. A heavy burden weighed on his mind from which he could only clear himself by honest and plain speaking. For eight years he had gone in and out among the Malagasy and found that, although Christianity was changing the whole Hova nation for the better, they still clung to the maintenance of slavery as one of their cherished institutions. Knowing how many Christian nations had done the same, and how gradually conviction works, the missionaries had trusted that time

would change their habits, being content to put in a word here and a word there against slavery, as opportunity offered. Moreover, it was closely interwoven with their social and political life, rather in development of a system of vassalage than slavery as we understand it. Slaves were not the degraded, ill-used people that they so frequently appear to have been in the southern American States ; and Christianity had considerably lightened their lot. Yet the evil was there. The moral canker did surely eat into the national vitality ; so that when his time came to leave these people he loved so much, it is little wonder that Joseph Sewell grew more and more convinced that he would be guilty of unfaithfulness did he not relieve his mind on this subject.

He records that for two months, night and day, the responsibility of utterance was always with him. An occasion for speech came. On June 5th, a large concourse assembled at the Monthly Prayer-meeting at the Ambatonakanga Church when he gave his farewell address. Fearlessly and most touchingly he appealed to them, speaking from the words, " Touch not the unclean thing." His address will be found in the appendix. It has been reprinted, for it conveys, as little else can, a picture of the man, his sympathy and charity, and yet his determination not to let charity degenerate into comfortable easy-going tolerance. Moreover, an address of this sort is not merely for one time or place. In 1876, it was slavery in Madagascar that aroused his pity and made him tremble for that people's welfare. It has been the present writer's

lot to live with J. S. Sewell at a time of national weakness in England ; and over and over again one saw how strongly he dreaded our nation falling yet farther away from the Christian Ideal. The lowering of the religious standard in our desire to be rich or to emulate others, the prominence given to self-indulgence among all classes, our ready recourse to warfare rather than an appeal to "pure reason" in the settlement of national disputes, at times overclouded his usual optimism,—that optimism which was founded on experience and which believed that the world was really growing better, for "the Lord reigneth ; He sitteth King for ever."

That his address caused consternation and anger was evident even before he concluded it. Beloved as he was by the natives, many even refused to forgive him before he left ; some of the missionaries feared it might be a word *out* of season, causing more harm than good ; one native who was present was heard to remark, "He ought to be killed, and his head used as a cannon-ball." A highly-coloured version was at once taken to the Prime Minister, and as there was just at the time some fear in the native mind that the English, who were at that time calling the attention of the Malagasy Government to the importation of African slaves into Madagascar contrary to the treaty with England, might attempt to enforce the total abolition of slavery, there was no little excitement. The Prime Minister sent for a copy of the address and at once saw that it was in no sense a political document. The following morning he addressed the people, telling

them plainly that if they were inclined to free their slaves they were perfectly at liberty to do so, but that the government had not the least intention of telling them they *must*.

As to any results of his address, J. S. Sewell says : " I do not for a moment anticipate that what has just taken place will cause any rapid change of opinion on the subject of slavery on the part of the native Christians ; still less do I look for any sudden change of policy on the part of the Government ; but the attention of the Christians has been drawn to the real iniquity of slavery, apart from any political considerations, in a way that it has never been before, and I believe it will prove not to have been in vain. Results, however, we must leave to the wonder-working power of the God of peace and love."*

When Joseph Sewell left Antananarivo, the Ambositantely Church sent a letter to the F.F.M.A. from which the following is an extract :—

" And concerning his conduct during his residence with us it has been very good. We have never yet seen him angry without cause, either in the school or in the Church. Teaching the children, and living among people of little knowledge are very difficult, but this has been done by Mr. Sewell in gentleness

* This address of J. S. S. was certainly "not in vain" ; a year after he left, on account of the pressure of the English Government, all the African slaves in the island were set free by Royal proclamation. There is evidence that the words of J. S. S., well remembered as they were, made some of the Christians at any rate more readily accept the proclamation. One well-known man at the capital told me that this was certainly so in his case. He had many African slaves.—H.E.C.

and wisdom. Very often he has been called upon to join with many in considering weighty business, whether in the town or country, but he has never offended any by his words, for he had ability so to arrange necessary business, and to advise people about their mistakes, in wisdom and love, so that no offence was given. And on account of this he became the friend of all and was much honoured, not by us at Ambohitantely only, but by all classes of people. And his teaching and preaching have been very beneficial. He is a man of good judgment and is able to tell what is in his mind in simplicity but in words of great weight. . . . And his way of conducting Church business was very wise ; he is very cautious and very careful not to come to hasty conclusions ; therefore, although he might be convinced that certain things were proper to be done, he would not hurry them forward too fast and beyond what he knew the people were prepared for ; but when he saw that they were prepared for a step, then he urged it forward. He did not think so much of doing a great work as of making permanent that which he did."

"Frank" has sent some recollections of his work in connection with Ambohitantely which bear out this testimony. One story is distinctly amusing :—

"On one occasion a preacher asked Mr. Sewell's help in the preparation of a sermon on Proverbs xxx. 33, 'For the churning of milk bringeth forth butter,' etc. The preacher asked the best practical suggestions from the text. Instead of giving him what he asked for Mr. Sewell told him that there were very many

simpler and much better texts from which to prepare a sermon, and drew his attention to some of these. On a country journey Mr. Sewell remonstrated with a man who had divorced his wife. The man quoted the passage, 'If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off,' etc., adding that his wife was like his right hand, and she had greatly offended him, so he had cut her off." Frank tells us that J. S. Sewell spoke kindly yet seriously to him, pointing out how cherished sins were as dear as the hand or eye but must be given up, but we do not hear if in the sequel the man took back his wife.

As to the character of his work itself, Frank writes :—
" Mr. Sewell looked after the congregation with fatherly care and with great patience. He preached at Ambohitantely about once a fortnight. His addresses were so simple that even a child could understand them. They were very evangelical in character so that the most callous and hard-hearted were affected by them. Many of this congregation who have fallen asleep came to believe on Jesus Christ through his ministrations. Although it is now nearly twenty-five years since Mr. Sewell left Madagascar he is still remembered with love and reverence by many. His patience and gentleness in dealing with them, his unremitting efforts for their spiritual and temporal welfare, made a deep impression on them and will yet be long remembered."

As a further proof, if indeed further proof were needed, of J. S. Sewell's continual interest in Madagascar after he left the island, we may state that

on three occasions he addressed what we may call an "Epistle" to the Christians in the island.

The first was dated Leicester, August 16th, 1882, and was addressed to the church at Antananarivo, especially to the one at Ambohitantely,—the pastor, the preacher, and the deacons; also to "all the country churches connected with Ambohitantely, whether those near at hand or those far away."

The second was dated Leicester, July 2nd, 1891, and was addressed, "To all the Malagasy, who have true love for Jesus Christ."

The third was dated Leicester, July 6th, 1897, and was addressed, "To the Church at Ambohitantely and to the Churches in the country district dependent on it."

The first and second were printed and circulated; the third was not printed; it was written after Madagascar had become a French colony, and contained expressions that would certainly have been misunderstood by both Malagasy and French. The general purport of the Epistle was given to the people assembled at the Yearly Meeting in October, 1897.

From this last one we make a few extracts:—

"It is now a little more than a year since you wrote to me and my family a letter full of warm sympathy and love, touching the sore affliction that has befallen us in the violent death of my beloved son and daughter and their little child at Arivonimamo. From my heart I thank you very much for that kind letter, and I ought to have expressed my thanks to you by letter long ago. But I wanted not only to thank you

for your sympathy but also to tell you how very sorry I was for the whole Church of Christ in Madagascar in consequence of the troubles that have befallen you. I have been longing ever since my great sorrow to comfort you, and if possible, to give you some fresh strength and courage amid the temptations and perplexities through which you have had to pass. Certainly I have not forgotten you. Very often have I prayed for you." . . . After alluding to the conquest of the island by the French, J. S. Sewell goes on to say :—

"The Jews were then ruled by strangers, and we read in the New Testament of Roman Governors, of Roman soldiers, and of tribute paid to Caesar. The people amongst whom Paul laboured were subject to Rome. Yet we never find Jesus or Paul or Peter saying a word to encourage opposition to their foreign rulers. Jesus said, 'Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and to God the things which are God's.' And Paul's words as to prayer for our rulers are strong and very explicit, 'I exhort therefore first of all,' he says, 'that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men, for kings and all that are in high places,' etc. And these words exactly accord with those written long before by Jeremiah to the Jews in Babylon, (read Jer. xxix, 1-7, especially the last verse), 'And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captive ; pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.' . . .

"Just this word from God : 'The Lord thy God is

with thee whithersoever thou goest.' That was enough. Joshua knew that God would be true to His word; he trusted Him; he was never dismayed, except once after a great sin had been committed, so he succeeded in the work which God had given him to do. And when Jesus Christ was about to ascend to Heaven and to leave His disciples to carry on the work, which He had begun, of establishing His Kingdom on the earth,—a far greater work than that committed to Joshua,—He gave them the same reason for always being of good courage. He said: 'Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world.' They are therefore, for you and for me and for all His true servants at all times and in every place; and they are enough; what greater ground for confidence can we have? . . . God grant that His love may be so shed abroad in our hearts that we may each know in our own case the full meaning of the words, 'perfect love casteth out fear.' I am, with much love and very earnest longings and fervent prayer for your best welfare,

"Your ever faithful friend,

"JOSEPH S. SEWELL."

We cannot better conclude this account of Joseph Sewell as a missionary than by quoting a letter from one who had worked day by day with him in Madagascar and who has the welfare of the Malagasy as closely at heart as he had. Henry E. Clark, writing from Madagascar under date March 30th, 1901, says:—

"I have been on very intimate terms of friendship with him for many years ; we have kept up a regular correspondence ever since he left the island, almost every mail that came bringing me a letter from him. During the past two or three years this has been much more irregular ; and there was abundant evidence in those I did receive that his health was rapidly failing. His letters, even in the darkest periods of the late history of Madagascar, always expressed his firm faith in the religious future of the Malagasy ; if only the Christians were faithful to their convictions all would be well with them whatever might be their political future ; about this latter he never made any prophecy.

"His letters were also always full of sympathy and comfort to us missionaries ; particularly was this the case during the periods of the two French wars. Over and over again he drew my attention to the help to be derived from the words in Isaiah xxx. 15 : 'In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.'

"It is, I believe, known to very few that at one time, and not very many years ago, J. S. Sewell had seriously under consideration the question of returning to Madagascar for a short time. I am not aware that anyone knew of this except myself, though probably it was known to one or two others. I cannot remember the exact time, but I do know that from one cause or another our mission here was very much reduced in numbers, and he wrote to me saying that he had been seriously considering whether he ought not to return here to render help during this period.

I remember thinking at the time that it was very unlikely to be carried out, but it was an illustration of his intense interest in the Madagascar Mission.

"The trials and troubles that came upon him connected with Madagascar were very heavy. There was one thing that he was very anxious about on leaving Madagascar; on his arrival at home in 1876, he wrote to me about it and added something to the following effect:—that he could bear anything if only he had good news of his younger daughter whom he had left in the island, the wife of J. C. Thorne of the L.M.S. Mission. My impression is that he added the words, 'If anything happen to her I don't know what I shall do.' Yet we know that very shortly after this he received news of her death. But when the news came he received it in the most beautiful Christian spirit. I arrived at home a few months after this event; he met me with tears in his eyes, saying, 'Thou art the first person I have seen from Madagascar since *her* death.'

"Just in the same spirit he received the news of the murder of his daughter, son-in-law, and their little girl in 1895.

"It seems to me that a few words of his in the introductory chapter of 'Faithful unto Death' are among the most touching I have ever read. Alluding to the fact that some at home had almost lost hope in the Malagasy because none of them were willing to stand by William and Lucy Johnson and protect them in their hour of need, J. S. Sewell says:—(page xvi.) 'Surely no one can feel more painfully than I have done

the desertion which befell my beloved children at that awful hour.' But then he goes on to make excuses for them and adds :—

“ ‘ There was no opportunity for rallying or turning the murderers from their purpose. The few true Christians remaining, with such terrible odds against them, could but flee. How can I charge them with cowardice or meanness or ingratitude ? ’ ”

“ Then he adds these memorable and touching words :—

“ ‘ But I do fervently thank God that we have it on record,—John xvi. 32,—that when Jesus told His disciples they should be scattered and leave him alone, He added, ‘ And yet I am not alone because the Father is with Me. And so I know that when my children were left alone He was with them. ’ ”

VI.

LATER LIFE.

JOSEPH Sewell returned to England in the Spring of 1876, and, with his invalid daughter, went to live at Belgrave, near Leicester. In the Autumn of the same year he married Lucy Ellis, the cousin and intimate friend of his first wife. His house adjoined the one which Lucy Sewell left on her marriage and where her sisters continued to reside. His sister-in-law, Margaret Ellis, who has kindly contributed some recollections of this period of his life, says :—

“The proximity of the two houses at Belgrave naturally made mutual interests very frequent, and during more than twenty years we received from our brother-in-law unfailing sympathy in joy and sorrow, this kindness being extended also to the wide family circle. In his later years, when his leisure was greater, Joseph Sewell greatly enjoyed his garden, sharing our sister’s vivid pleasure in the loveliness of the flowers ; for to both of them the beauty of Nature powerfully appealed. During these years we marked the consistent course of a genuine Christian, but the deepest impression of the reality of a ‘life hid with Christ in God’ was made upon us when in November, 1895, the telegram reached him conveying the tidings of the terrible event in Madagascar. The blow at first almost stunned our brother-in-law, but never

during that time of acute sorrow did we find him overwhelmed. His steadfast reliance on God, his unshaken trust in His goodness and love, and his submission notwithstanding the mystery of this dispensation, witnessed most powerfully to the Divine Presence ever with him. No word of bitterness regarding the authors of his children's deaths ever escaped his lips, nor did he allow his interest in Madagascar to be changed. He still followed with a deep and sorrowful attention the fortunes of the Mission and of the island, and clung to the belief that out of darkness light would one day dawn.

"We recall the pleasure with which he went to Hitchin, and afterwards to London, to attend the Monthly Committee Meetings of the F.F.M.A. and of the Syrian Mission, and of the Meeting for Sufferings, even when, towards the end of his life, we feared the fatigue would seriously tax his lessening strength.

"Soon after coming to Leicester, J. S. Sewell became a member of the Leicester Town Mission, his Christian influence and wise counsels being highly valued by his colleagues ; and until his death he acted as Superintendent to the Town Missionary stationed at Belgrave.

"His attachment to the Society of Friends was very deep ; he much valued taking part in the various assemblies of that body. He was very rarely absent from his own Quarterly Meeting, where his presence was always welcome ; and during the twenty-four years of his residence at Belgrave he never missed the attendance of any Yearly Meeting, until in 1900 his

failing health rendered such an engagement too great a strain upon his powers. Joseph Sewell watched with close and thoughtful attention the movement in our own as in other churches in the direction of a wider interpretation of the Bible, and studied carefully many of the utterances of the Higher Criticism, though often unable to agree with the conclusions arrived at. He attended the Manchester Conference with great interest, but was not able to take part in either the Scarborough or Birmingham Summer Schools, though he followed their deliberations with much Christian sympathy."

In 1878, Joseph Sewell became sole editor of *The Friend*, and continued ably to fill that responsible post until 1893. The work involved was very congenial to him, and it was a matter of regret when increasing years rendered it necessary for him to relinquish it. In this task of editorship his wife's help was invaluable. Her quick and correct literary instinct was just what he needed to supplement his cautious judgment. He might be described as a painstaking editor, certainly not a rash one. He dreaded the insertion of any matter which might tend to lower the "solid" tone of the publication. As editor he endeavoured to keep ever before him a standard which should represent what was best in the Society of Friends. The limited space in the periodical,—it was then only issued monthly,—often necessitated the omission of much interesting matter connected with the doings of other churches, or the curtailings of reviews of books which he felt might

have been of value in building up of the Society and widening its outlook. His sympathy with the enthusiasms of younger Friends was far greater than his cautious words often implied. But he was very severe on any approach to pretence, and if he thought he detected along with modern thought any "cant" of superiority his distaste was profound.

On one occasion, shortly before attending a Yearly Meeting, when some conversation arose as to the subjects likely to occupy the attention of Friends, and noticing that a young Friend had a special subject to lay before the Meeting which might occasion warm discussion and possibly some misunderstanding, he expressed the wish that there was not so much desire for notoriety among the younger generation. One of those present rather warmly defended the Friend in question, describing, from a more intimate knowledge, something of the process by which he had been led to his action, and the real concern that weighed upon him. One of the first remarks J. S. Sewell made on his return home was on this subject, to the effect that he was very grateful for what had been previously said, confessing that he had been supercritical, and, but for his interest having been aroused, might never have attended that sitting nor perceived the real earnest striving for the good of the Society of Friends at work in unfamiliar guise. It was amusing in later years to his friends to see how warmly he championed this younger man, how large a faith he had in his singleness of aim when others were inclined to administer too liberal supplies of cold water or to

doubt his orthodoxy. Joseph Sewell seemed, when once his sympathies were aroused, to gain a second power of comprehension, to readily follow the mind of a speaker or writer ; but, lacking sympathy, or having any reason to doubt a person's sincerity, he appeared unable to grasp a thought expressed in unfamiliar language. The writer recollects having to give up in despair the attempt to interest him in the poetry of Robert Browning. Poetry, in fact, appealed to him quite as much from the sense of association as from any innate beauty, and few could be more familiar with Cowper's writings.

How cordially and lovingly he could differ from his friends may be seen in the following extract from a letter to one whom he had for many years known and honoured. His friend had remonstrated with him as to the character of a review of a theological work which was causing some stir in the Society of Friends at the time. After a correspondence extending over some months both felt it wise to close the discussion, neither altering his opinions. In his last letter Joseph Sewell says :—

“ Though it ” [this correspondence] “ has occupied a good deal of time, and much beyond the mere writing, I have felt it has been useful to myself in many ways. And perhaps it may have helped us both to feel more strongly than before how there may be a warm attachment to our Lord, jealousy for His honour, zeal for the advancement of His Kingdom, and a restful confidence in His forgiving love and the exceeding riches of His grace, combined with much divergence

of opinion even on subjects so important as these which we have been discussing.

“Is it not probable, aye, much more than probable, that, when in the great Home above we shall together sing the praises of Him who was slain and has redeemed us to God by His blood, we shall both see how utterly inadequate were our conceptions whilst on earth of His work of redemption, both as to the wisdom and love therein manifested and the depth of humiliation He underwent for our sakes?”

It was very evident to those who knew J. S. Sewell intimately that his theological views developed and ripened as he grew older. He held no cast-iron creed to which facts and experience had to be fitted. Starting from a somewhat narrow outlook, he broadened as the years passed on. The note-book, to which reference was made in a previous chapter, that he used for his Scripture classes when at Ackworth, contains one lesson on the subject of future punishment and the horrors of Hell. Judging from that alone one would be tempted to think that he was Calvinistic in the extreme, but at the very close of his life we have another statement on the same subject.

When nearly eighty years old, he felt, to quote his own touching words, “deeply impressed with the conviction that there is one duty I yet owe to my Lord, which, hitherto, has been too much neglected, and which demands prompt and very earnest attention before it be too late.” He then alludes to the time when, as a teacher at Ackworth, he studied the subject, and how the preparation of those very lessons awoke doubt in

his own mind as to the scriptural ground for some of the views commonly accepted. We refer to an article published in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* for Fourth Month, 1899, in which Joseph Sewell has summarised extracts from the Gospels and Epistles bearing on the subject of future punishment. The paper is entitled, "The Non-eternity of Penal Suffering." Here he enunciates the idea which we find perhaps more forcibly expressed in Drummond's "Natural law in the Spiritual World" of the death, or extinction of the soul which continues to reject the gift of Eternal Life. But whilst Drummond largely bases his theory on analogy in the Natural World and on the Pauline writings, with little reference to the Gospels, and considerably enlarges on it, J. S. Sewell quotes the passages from Scripture bearing on the subject and in great measure leaves the reader to work out his own conclusions.

The paper aroused a good deal of interest in his own religious Society. Several of his relatives received letters alluding to its exceeding helpfulness from some who had before felt a sense of perplexity as to what really was the scriptural teaching on the subject. In reply to one addressed to himself Joseph Sewell says :—

" *Belgrave, 11th May, 1899.*

" MY DEAR FRIEND,

" I was much interested in receiving a few lines from thee the other day, reminding me as it did of the times when one thing or another called us into more frequent correspondence. It was pleasant

to be thanked for 'courage' shown in writing the article which called thy kind letter forth. I cannot say that I felt worthy of them. It had to be done, and I was, I think, helped to do it. But the only lines on which I could write prevented me from entering upon subjects which were more or less aside from the great question before us. Not that I am without thought on these subjects, but I feel sure I am wise in confining my argument to Scripture authority, and, with thee, I feel more and more as I grow older that on these points we do not *know*, and more than that, *here*, our only safe course is *restfully* to leave with God what is still unrevealed.

"I have been far from well lately, but am I trust somewhat stronger and better, all the better for having been able to finish what had long pressed upon my conscience and which I had begun to fear I might have to leave unfinished."

During the whole of his residence in Leicester Joseph Sewell filled a very useful place in the Meeting. A member of that Meeting writes :—

"Before his coming, Leicester Meeting had within living memory had only one recorded minister, Edward Brewin, as a resident. He had died in September, 1870, and during the intervening time the Meeting had lost cohesion and had become somewhat restless and dissatisfied. J. S. Sewell's presence amongst us seemed just what the meeting was unconsciously longing for, and his life and ministry had a wonderfully uniting and calming effect,—an effect which did not pass away."

His sermons were always practical and simple. He felt the gift of public ministry to be a very serious responsibility, and his desire to be a real minister,—the servant of all,—was intense. Some lines from an unpublished poem of his brother's, Edward Sewell, used, he said, often to be his prayer on taking his seat :—

“ My children, wait ; Lord, teach me what to teach ;
To each soul present hand, for mutual sharing,
The Cup, Thyself, Thy blood-bought Covenant bearing ;
Break Thou, dear Lord, the Bread of Life to each.

Here, Father, on the Altar of Christ's death,
Accept this memory as our best oblation ;
The kindled flames of grateful adoration
Waft to Thyself by Thy soul-searching Breath.”

Up to his last illness he kept in touch with public affairs, often alluding, when speaking in Meeting, to what might be occupying men's minds in the world at large. He generally read any books on social questions that came before his notice, and was an ardent and consistent teetotaller all his life.

It is unnecessary to say how true and constant an advocate of peace principles he was. His preface to “ Faithful unto Death ” is the quintessence of the peace spirit ; and yet no family in the Society of Friends of the present generation suffered as his did by the war spirit. When the war broke out in South Africa the dread was constantly present with him that tragedies similar to that enacted in Madagascar might take place, and innocent victims be sacrificed by the alarmed and distracted natives. He also felt strongly that the members of the Society of Friends jeopardised

their chances of influence for peace by too vehement advocacy of either combatant. Judged by the spirit of Christ, both sides were absolutely wrong to submit to the arbitrament of the sword ; judged by the usual pagan and worldly standard of even civilised nations, both, to him, appeared to have ample grounds for a quarrel. We dwell rather fully on his views upon this subject, for it was one on which he often spoke during the last year of his life ; and he tried impartially to see the various points of view which have been presented. As a Society, he felt that, by their remonstrances to the Government, Friends had absolved themselves from blood-guiltiness in the matter and should stand aside and let those whose consciences were free from a sense of evil carry on the work they had themselves begun. Then, when the two peoples came from under the spell of the glamour and sentiment, and saw the inevitable facts in all their long chain of suffering and horror, Friends should, a strong and sober body, do all in their power to show, by loving sympathy and wise impartiality, a more excellent way.

At the close of 1897, the death of his wife left him once more alone, his daughter Anna having died some time before, but his remaining years were cheered by the presence in his home of his elder grand-daughter, Margaret H. Johnson, who cared lovingly for him until his death three years later. It was beautiful to see in those last years how he interested himself in the younger generation, and the wonderful sympathy and brightness with which he would discuss their views and interests.

Little known, he had been regarded by some as somewhat dogmatic, generally with sound reason and judgment to support his opinions, but very slow in altering his own point of view. Intimate acquaintance revealed him very humble and ready to learn, even up to the last. In the winter evenings he much enjoyed having some book to read aloud, and his remarks on the writings of G. A. Smith, Westcott, and Horton, not to mention many others, showed a ripe experience and catholic sympathy, which were often as interesting as the books themselves.

Having to give up walking to any extent, and much of the active work in his garden, was a matter of regret to him. His keen observation of Nature, his joy in the first signs of spring, and the lavish splendour of summer, made the curtailment of his walks a real disappointment. He also felt the inability to take long journeys, and the consequent cutting off from intercourse with his friends.

In the summer of 1900, however, he was well enough to much enjoy a visit with his grand-daughter to his sister, H. M. Grace, at Weston-super-Mare. He seemed to gain fresh strength and energy by the change, but in the autumn his health flagged again. In a letter written in November to his sister he speaks of more serious illness, but, after that slight reference to himself, writes of the troubles of other people, particularly referring to a matter which had troubled and perplexed her. In this connection he says :—

“ I have been thinking much to-day of the text for the day in my text-book :—‘ Understanding what

the will of the Lord is ' (Eph. v. 17). But especially have I been dwelling on an extract from a letter of John Newton's entered below the text, which has for many years been a favourite of mine :—

“ ‘ There is many a thing which the world calls disappointment, but there is no such word in the dictionary of faith. What to others are disappointments are to believers intimations of the Will of God.’ What a blessing it is to know His Will, cheerfully to submit to it, and willingly and heartily to do it ! ”

He had one or two attacks of illness, but care and rest seemed to restore him to a fair amount of vigour ; and although those around him could see a failing of his powers, it was so gradual, and he was so cheerful, that there appeared to be no reason to expect that when about the middle of December he had to take to his bed, it would be more than a temporary weakness. A few weeks before, a very similar attack had made the doctor insist that he should refrain from all exertion, and not attend Meeting or any other engagement in Leicester for a time. However, on the 19th, an operation was deemed advisable ; it did not give the ease which was hoped, and on December 20th, 1900, he passed away. The long journey ended, he entered on the fulness of joy for evermore.

“ Suffice it if,—my good and ill unreckoned,
And both forgiv'n through Thy abounding grace,
I find myself by hands familiar beckoned
Unto my fitting place.

Some humble door among Thy many mansions,
Some sheltering shade where sin and striving cease,

And flows forever through heaven's green expansions
The river of Thy peace.

There, from the music round about me stealing,
I fain would learn the new and holy song,
And find at last, beneath the trees of healing,
The life for which I long."

APPENDIX.

EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS
DELIVERED BY J. S. SEWELL AT THE MONTHLY PRAYER
MEETING AT AMBATONAKANGA CHURCH,
ANTANANARIVO, JUNE 5th, 1876.

“Touch not the unclean thing.”—2 *Cor. vi. 7.*

THE second day in June in the year 1867 was a Sunday, and I had arrived here from England the day before. On that Sunday I stood in this pulpit and addressed a few words to those assembled here ; they were my first words to you. And now on the fifth of June, exactly nine years afterwards, I stand again in this pulpit, and the words I shall address to you to-day are to be my last ; for on Thursday I leave this place for England, and do not expect to return to you again. So I come to you, my friends, to bid you farewell, and to give you my parting words, but I do not intend exactly to preach a sermon to you.

The kingdom of God has made great advances among you during the nine years I have been living with you ; the general knowledge of the people has

also greatly increased. When I came, the great majority of the inhabitants of Imerina still trusted to their idols; but about two years afterwards they were all burnt, and now they are hardly even remembered. When I came, polygamy and divorce were thought to be quite right, but now they are regarded as something very disgraceful. When I came, a great many markets were held every Sunday, and at Andohalo* things were sold on that day as on other days; but now in a great many of the towns in Imerina, and especially here in Antananarivo, the Sabbath is as well observed as it is in England. When I came, there were but 92 churches connected with the London Missionary Society in the island and but twenty schools; but now there are about 800 churches and preaching stations in Imerina alone, and I suppose there are at least 200 more among the Betsileo and the other tribes who have submitted to the Hova. When we think also of the number of schools now in existence, and the number of those who can read and write; when we think of the number of preachers and evangelists who have been sent out by the churches and missionaries to spread the gospel in country places; when we think of the number of books of various kinds which have been printed here, and of the number of Bibles, Testaments, Hymn Books, and other books which have been bought during those nine years; when we think also of the money spent by the Queen and her people in building churches, in almsgiving, and in spreading the gospel, we are filled with wonder,

* The name of a wide open piece of ground in the centre of the city.

and our hearts are glad because the kingdom of God has truly made great progress in Madagascar, the knowledge of the people has greatly increased, and the customs of the people have, in many things, greatly improved.

* * * *

But let us not think of the past alone, let us think of the future also. We all agree that the kingdom of God has advanced among us during the past nine years. There has been no persecution ; we have not been much troubled with hindering things ; the Queen and the leading men in the kingdom have, as it were, been nursing fathers and mothers to the Church, whilst those who have shown skill and power in preaching the word of God have been honoured, and their fame has been spread abroad. But, at the same time, the number of mere hypocrites has also greatly increased, and there are many now in our churches like By-ends in "Pilgrim's Progress." This was his confession :—" Firstly, we never strive against wind and tide. Secondly, we are always most zealous when religion goes in his silver slippers : we love to walk with him in the street when the sun shines and the people applaud him ; but in gloomy days, when religion is out of favour, then we take care never to follow him openly." Now we must be very careful lest we give way to notions like these.

* * * *

What then is your duty with regard to the future ? Firstly, be very watchful, this is most necessary. Secondly, rely confidently on your Saviour and your

Guide : this cannot be dispensed with. But this too : let the word of God be the rule by which you regulate all your actions, and do not fear to walk in the light which His word gives you. When in days past God opened your eyes, and you knew that there was but one God, and when His love to you in Christ Jesus was also made known to you, then you forsook your false Gods and prayed to Jehovah alone, even though severe afflictions befell you in consequence. Through the light God gave you, you saw also the iniquity of divorce and polygamy, and those evil customs were laid aside ; and, as you walked in the light, you perceived that many other long accustomed practices were unclean in God's sight ; and now these too are forbidden things. Do not shut your eyes, my friends ; do not fear the light ; do not be uneasy lest you should see that there still remain other unclean things which will have to be rejected.

There is one subject that has been on my mind day and night, and I feel constrained to mention it. It has grieved me from the day when I first came to Madagascar to the present time, but, hitherto, I have not dared to speak of it openly in the church, lest I should do no good by doing so : but I am about to leave you, and I can repress my feelings no longer. At the same time, should any one be grieved by what I am about to say, let me alone bear the blame. I have asked counsel of no one, whether European or native ; no one has assisted me by correcting my Malagasy, and no one knows what I am about to say. Therefore, if any one is to blame, it is I alone.

There are many among you now who know something of the miseries which befall the Mozambiques who are torn away from the land of their fathers and sold here as slaves. You know that they are stolen ; you know too, that their miseries are great before they reach this country ; you know that many people are killed in battle or die of suffering on the road or on the sea, during their importation into this country. So long as you were ignorant of these things and thought nothing about them, some excuse could be made for you ; but now, unless you altogether shut your eyes, you must see clearly that the wickedness of those who convey Mozambiques to Madagascar is very great. But it is not only those who convey them here and sell them to you that are guilty ; those who buy them and make slaves of them are guilty also.

If anyone steals my watch and sells it again, is not he who buys it, knowing that it is stolen, an accomplice with the thief ? And in the same way those who buy Mozambiques and make slaves of them are partners with the wicked men who first stole them. Most truly are they sharers in their wickedness and there is no excuse for them. So long as the Malagasy buy the Mozambiques, there will be Arabs and others who will steal them in order to sell them. It is an unclean thing, an evil thing, a very great wickedness. I beg of you who believe in Jesus Christ and rejoice in His mercy, separate yourselves from this wickedness, and " touch not the unclean thing."

But my mind refuses to confine its attention to the Mozambiques alone ; listen, therefore, my friends,

whilst I speak to you a little respecting others living among you who have cause for grief.

There are three motives which induce people to work for others, or to serve them. Some do good to others and work for them because they love them ; some, because they receive wages ; and others because they are compelled.

Jesus Christ came here upon earth and went about doing good, and suffered bitter anguish, because of His love to us in order that we might obtain salvation. And the servants of Christ still take Him for their example, and many of them work hard in order to benefit others, whilst love to Christ and love to man is at the root of all they do. Oh, that the number of those who are influenced by love alone in their efforts to advance the kingdom of Christ here may greatly increase. But love does not only show itself in the service of God. Very many are the friends and relations, who, uninfluenced either by wages or compulsion serve one another from love, and it is very right that it should be so.

There are a great many also who work for others in order to obtain wages or money. Many of these are directly hired, as the carpenter and the builder ; but some also, as the trader, do good to others in order to receive profit upon their trade. Perhaps the greater proportion of the work done for others is done in order to obtain wages or profit, and this also is quite right.

There are many, also, who serve others because they are compelled to do so. Under some circum-

stances this also is quite right. The government that has no power to compel its subjects to serve it is of no worth, and will soon come to nothing. The practice of different nations differs in regard to this ; some compel their subjects to serve them in doing whatever work their government requires ; some, on the other hand, raise taxes from their subjects and pay wages to those who do the work necessary for the government of the country. It is not my business now to say which of these two modes of operation is the best ; let each nation do that which it considers best for itself ; but I wish you not to misunderstand me. I want you to see clearly that the kingdom which does not cause its subjects to pay taxes, must compel them to do public service without their receiving payment for it. There are limits to this, but it is not my business now to talk about them. In addition to this it is quite right for parents, whilst their children are young, to compel them to do their will. Truly there are limits to this, but owing to the love of parents for their children, we may hope that there are not many who over-work them.

But, excepting governments and parents, I know of none who have any right to force people to serve them. My money, my clothes, and all my possessions are my own, and he is a thief who takes them from me by force ; but my body, my strength, and my mind are also my own, for God has given them to me, and no one has a right to take them from me by force ; and in God's sight we all stand on the same footing whoever we may be, whether European,

or Hova, or Mozambique. I do not want to blame you for what you have done in days past ; what you have done has been in accordance with the custom of your ancestors, and you have followed the same course for many years, and, probably, have thought but little about it. But do not shut your eyes now, my friends, and do not be afraid of the light, and then you will see clearly that those who compel others to serve them, (except the Government, and except parents whilst their children are young), and thus receive good from their strength of body or their skill, and yet do not pay them for what they do, take by force that which is not their own. Even though those who thus serve them are theirs by right of inheritance or right of purchase, it makes no difference, because the commencement of it all was theft. There are, indeed, those who are slaves through debt, or who have been condemned to slavery by the Government, but their children have not been to blame, and according to the law of God, children are not to bear the iniquity of their fathers.

I know that the Jews had slaves, but we know, also, that they allowed polygamy and divorce, and we all agree that these are not proper for Christians. The Arabs and all Mahometans still allow polygamy, divorce, and slavery, but except the kingdom of Madagascar, and one or two Catholic Governments, there is no Christian government in which slavery is now allowed. In my eyes, and in the eyes of good Christians all the world over, slavery is considered an unclean thing. If it appears so in your eyes, remember the

words, "Touch not the unclean thing." In days gone by you heard as it were the word of God, saying, "Put away your idols"; to this you agreed and refused to worship them any longer, though the doing so brought great trouble upon you. Then you heard again the word of God saying, "Keep clear of polygamy and divorce," and you separated from these evil customs, and know well that this has been a blessing to you. And now I know that there are those among you who know that slavery is an unclean thing, and you hear as it were a word coming from God saying, "Separate yourselves from this unrighteous custom." He that hath ears to hear let him hear. Remember the words of Christ, "Whoso forsaketh not all that he hath cannot be My disciple."

But I hear as it were some among you saying, "What, then, ought we to do? What you say is true, but we see no light on the course we ought to take." It is difficult for me, a foreigner, to tell you what you ought to do in this matter; but one thing seems very clear to me, so listen to me for a little while, my friends. Do not wait for some act of the Government, nor suppose that this business is a matter for the Government alone to decide; do not sit still doing nothing till the Government has done all that is needed. The Government has no power to change a custom of this kind until it is the wish of the many, even though it should desire to do so. How did those among you act who first prayed to God? Did they wait for some law before they left off praying to idols? No; those who knew that the idols were nothing, and that there was no

God but Jehovah, refused to worship idols any more. And though the Government opposed them with all its might, they followed the word of God only and preferred to die rather than worship idols. When they left off worshipping idols they did so at the risk of their lives ; many lost all their property and many also were put to death ; and if any of you should refuse any longer to treat people as slaves, you will not have to bear more suffering than these had to bear.

One day, about five or six years ago, the pastor of one of our churches came to me in the quiet, to ask me a few questions respecting slavery. His mind was not at rest about it, and he asked me what it was that made slavery wrong. When I had answered his questions, he said, "What then ought we to do?" My reply was to this effect :—I said to him, "There were many slaves formerly in England, but they were set free a very long time ago, and there have been no more since ; nevertheless, if we examine the history of England, it is impossible for us to say in what year slavery ceased to exist. It was no law of the realm that put a stop to it, but it gradually ceased of itself, and a great blessing it has been to the kingdom of England. It is said that certain bishops and other ecclesiastics were the first to set their own slaves free, then many followed their example, and thus slavery was put an end to." Then I said to my friend, "It is for you who know that slavery is wrong to do as those bishops did." When I had said this, we were quiet for a while and my friend seemed absorbed in thought ; then he said, "We shall need great grace to do this."

Those words of our friend are true ; we all need great grace to oppose the devil, and to turn away from that which is wrong ; but our Lord has great grace at His disposal, and He will give us according to our need, and according to our faith. If you cease to be undecided, and if you thoroughly resolve to do God's will, even at the risk of losing all your property, may you not trust God for the future ? Has not our Lord said, " Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things needful shall be added unto you ? " Will He not make plain to you what you ought to do ? That He most certainly will, and I believe that if you yield to God in this matter you will find that the clouds you so much dread are full of blessings for yourselves and your children, and, perhaps, the path of duty will be far easier for you than you expect. But if you know what is right to be done, whether easy or difficult, take great care, lest you reject the guidance of God.

I am well aware that one effect of the establishment of the true religion here has been to better the condition of the slaves. When we consider their marriages, their clothing, their food, and many other things connected with them, we see most truly that they are much better off than they were, and this is all owing to the advance of religion amongst us. This has often gladdened my heart ; but now I am afraid lest there should be some who think that true religion and slavery are not really opposed to each other, but that slavery may be regulated and improved so as to be right and clean in God's sight. It is something

that *cannot* be made clean, my friends ; the fountain is bitter, and who can make clean and sweet the waters that flow from it ?

I feel sure that so long as the Christians in Madagascar are favourable to slavery, religion cannot prosper. Love to God, and love to our neighbour, are at the root of all true religion ; and slavery is not compatible with true love ; therefore, so long as the Christians here follow this custom, religion will be like a man in chains, and cannot move forward freely. And if religion does not overthrow slavery, slavery will greatly weaken religion, will deprive it of all true courage, and load it with chains.

I could say much more on this subject, but I do not wish to say too much ; consider well what I have said and let each ask God to teach him what His will is. And bear with me, my friends who are in trouble because you are slaves, and permit me to advise you also to ask of God what is your duty. You will see from the Holy Scriptures that it is your place to be obedient to your masters, and to serve them as the servants of Christ, for these are Paul's words to you (Eph. vi. 5-6). Peter also says, " Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." The commands of God are not intended to cause grief, but to do us good, and it is the height of folly to refuse to obey them, whether those who do so are masters or slaves.

When I was about eighteen years of age, my mother sent me a paper which had just then been printed, telling of the death of Rasalama, the first of those who

were put to death during the persecution ; and from that day to this there has scarcely been any country, except my own, which has so continually occupied my thoughts as Madagascar. I long that this kingdom may become noted. Even now it is to some extent noted among the other kingdoms of the earth. There are some few people across the ocean who do not believe the gospel ; they look upon it as something invented by man, and not the word of God, and they regard it as having no power to do good. But there are some who reply to this, "Look at Madagascar, and there you see the power of the gospel to do good to men, and to alter their lives for the better." Thus you see that already Madagascar is noted among other nations, and brought forward as a proof of the truth of the Holy Scriptures ; and the boldness of the Christians here in days past has given encouragement to many. Do not turn back and cease from this holy boldness, my friends, lest you greatly disappoint many who are watching you with interest.

Yes, I long that this kingdom may become a noted one. There are many kingdoms which have become noted on account of their power to conquer other kingdoms ; and I long that you, my friends, the Hova, may become the conquerors of many nations. Many were the kingdoms conquered by the Greeks, the Romans, and the French. Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and Napoleon Bonaparte are still noted throughout the world on account of the many kingdoms they subdued ; nevertheless, praise and glory from man only was all they gained by it, and this does

not profit them now, because "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." God forbid that you should seek honour and glory like theirs.

Yet I long that you should conquer many nations. I long that the Ibara, and the Sakalava, and all the tribes of Madagascar may be conquered by you, and all be brought into the kingdom of Christ. I do not want you to take spears and guns and cannon in this warfare, for I have no confidence in weapons such as these. Let it be the Gospel alone which you carry with you, and let love alone be your motive for going among them, for, in the extension of the kingdom of Christ, love is far more powerful than compulsion, and gentleness than cruelty; and truth and humility will accomplish far more than craftiness and pride.

And if, through the blessing of God upon your labours, the day shall come when the glad tidings of the gospel shall be heard through the length and breadth of Madagascar, there are yet many kingdoms not far from you which ought to be subdued by the soldiers of Christ. How if God shall have chosen you to carry the glad tidings of the gospel to the Mozambiques and other nations of Africa? How wretched is the condition of those nations now, continually attacked by Arabs and others who burn their villages, kill their strong men, and carry away their women and young men to be sold as slaves. If it should be your portion, in the extension of the kingdom of God to bring the Mozambiques into subjection

to Christ, would not that be an honour to you ? There are perhaps fifty millions of human beings dwelling in the midst of Africa who have remained in heathen darkness until now ; how I long that you may obtain glory and honour in the presence of the angels of God, by introducing some of these unfortunate people into the kingdom of Christ. How great has been the misery that has fallen to the lot of the Mozambiques because of the numbers you have enslaved. And how right it would be for you to do good to them in the future, in place of the evil done to them in the past. But you must have clean hands to engage in a work like this. The word of God says, "Touch not the unclean thing. . . Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."

Not that we missionaries who work with you in the extension of the kingdom of Christ boast that our own hands are clean. We are often sad because we have not attained to the mark which our Lord has laid down for us ; and yet, through what our worthy ancestors have done, we are free from the stain of slavery. Do not forget your children, and the generations that shall succeed you, my friends, but do what you can to free them from the pollution of this unclean thing.

Very often in days gone by, we, whether natives or missionaries, have asked God to pour out upon us largely of His Holy Spirit. During the past year His power has been manifested in England and in other countries in a way which has astonished many, and we have earnestly desired that the same power

might be manifested among us also. In our churches we have all united in asking for the Holy Spirit ; and in our families also, and in secret prayer, we have begged of God to grant this great blessing. But has God fully answered the request we have made to Him ? I think not. We have received, but not according to our petitions, and not according to our expectations. According to the words of the prophet Haggai, " We looked for much, and lo, it came to little." Why is this ? It has often been a source of deep sorrow to me. I have longed to see, with my own eyes, the power of the Holy Spirit manifested amongst us to a greater extent than has been yet known by us. What has hindered ? I would not for a moment say that you alone have been to blame. We missionaries, too, have not been without blame ; we know it, and we often feel sad in consequence. But reflect a little, my friends. The Holy Spirit begins His work in our hearts by showing us our sins ; and those who continue in sin after they know of the sinfulness of their actions grieve the Holy Spirit, and prevent His work in their hearts. What if the Holy Ghost should refuse to manifest His power amongst us so long as the Christians here grieve Him by their continuance in holding slaves ?

In many things you have obeyed the will of God, and in days past you risked your lives in His service ; but there still remains something for you to do. Do not be afraid ; put your trust in God ; keep back nothing which ought to be given up ; and these words of God in the book of the prophet Malachi will be

fulfilled to you, "Bring me all the tithes into my storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

It has been a very painful thing to me to speak to you as I have done this morning; it has not been done from any sudden impulse; and sometimes, in looking forward to it, I have hardly felt able to bear it; and, as I have said before, I have asked counsel of no one, so that if any blame should be given, it is I alone who ought to bear it. Nothing but my love to you has induced me to speak to you as I have done. You remember that a young man once went to Jesus and asked Him what he should do to inherit eternal life. Then Jesus, beholding him, *loved* him, and yet He said to him, "One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven; and come, take up thy cross and follow Me." It was love alone which led Jesus to direct that young man to do what was so hard to be done: and it is love alone which has led me to speak to you as I have done. We know nothing of the end of that young man, but I have confidence in you that, though my address may have somewhat pained you, you will yet thank me for it in days to come.

And now I must bid you farewell. I thank you much for all the kindness you have shown me during the nine years I have sojourned amongst you; and

yet I have not been altogether as a stranger. God has fulfilled to me the promise He made me when I left my children and my fatherland, and has given me children here an hundred-fold ; and it grieves me much to separate from them.

Finally, my friends, love one another, and be of one mind ; as Christ hath loved you do ye also love one another. Let the word of God be the mark by which you shall always guide your actions. Hold fast that which you have, and be not cowardly in your religion, nor easily overcome by fear, but be always bold to do God's will, let who will threaten. Cast your care upon God, for He careth for you. And may the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do His will, and cause us to meet again in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in glory and exceeding joy at the last day. Amen.

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